History of COVID-19 Response
March 12 to June 30, 2020

and

Official Plans for Operation
July 2020 to June 2021 Academic Year
Under COVID Restrictions

This plan has been submitted to the State Departments of Health, the State and National College Accrediting bodies and the CDC and is subject to change upon their requirements.

Updates to these documents may also occur due to changes in the spread of COVID-19 in each state, community, or on a VCOM Campus.

Faculty, staff, and students should refer to the document often and be sure they refer to the online copy at www.vcom.edu for the latest version of the plan.
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Section 1

The History of VCOM’s Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

March 13, 2020 through June 22, 2020
This section is provided for historical purposes as to VCOM’s initial response.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the medical education of the VCOM students remained a critical concern by VCOM; however, this was balanced with the critically important value placed on student wellness and safety, which remains VCOM’s primary concern. Additionally, the wellness of VCOM faculty and staff is a primary concern of VCOM.

On March 13, 2020, VCOM closed its campuses and OMS-3 and OMS-4 students were removed from their clinical rotations. By March 16, 2020, all medical students were removed from the clinical environment across the country following the recommendations of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) and the American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC), as well as other leading medical associations. The Department of Education and the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation also issued statements of guidance, allowing changes to the curriculum, including guidance pertaining to online learning.

VCOM first-year and second-year medical students were removed from class and all curriculum was placed online by Monday, March 16, 2020. The VCOM campuses were closed, restricting access to essential faculty and staff to support faculty and student activities. The faculty and staff who periodically worked on campus were those necessary to assure the successful completion of the final two weeks of blocks 3 and 7 and to prepare for the start of blocks 4 and 8. Students completed blocks, 3, 4, 7, and 8 online.

VCOM third-year medical students had approximately 8 weeks of curriculum remaining at the time of the closure. OMS-3 students were removed from clinical rotations and were provided with online education for the clinical rotation they were to complete in the four weeks that would follow. VCOM remained concerned about the clinical education experiences of the OMS-3 students and, therefore, moved the final third-year required rotation into the fourth year and the required research course of the OMS-4 year into the OMS-3 year as an exchange. The schedule changes were also supplemented with educational resources to learn more about care for patients with COVID-19 before returning to the clinical environment.

VCOM’s fourth-year medical students had approximately 6 weeks of curriculum remaining in their educational program. The students were removed from clinical rotations and provided with online clinical education matching the content of the clinical education that had been scheduled. Additional education on caring for patients with COVID-19 was provided during this time to prepare students for the care of COVID-19 patients. Students who met graduation requirements by the end of the six weeks were graduated.

During the above time, VCOM faculty and staff primarily worked from their homes to provide the remaining education for students. Faculty and staff with essential duties that could not be provided at home, came to campus and practiced social distancing and followed the rules of appropriate handwashing. The College provided masks to all employees and gloves where indicated. The facilities
staff who worked, followed appropriate cleaning and disinfecting procedures each night as faculty and staff left the building. The dedicated faculty and staff provided creative educational models for virtual education and many excellent models will be used long after the COVID-19 pandemic is over. VCOM TV, where all VCOM lectures are recorded and can be reviewed at home, provided an easy method for the online conversions.

Academic Assistance and Mental Health Services, provided by the Center for Institutional, Faculty, and Student Success, continued utilizing virtual meetings. Through the tremendous work of the faculty and staff on campus, including the work of the faculty and staff in the Center for Simulation and Technology (that quickly created robust educational and evaluation models to support education), VCOM students were able to complete their academic year online.

All VCOM events including open houses, accepted student days, graduation, and other on-campus events were canceled for the remainder of the academic year. Interviews for new students were rapidly moved online and included an informational video tour of the campus. The Admissions Committees met virtually ensuring that the Class of 2024 on all campuses has filled. Accepted Student’s Day was also recreated to be provided online.

VCOM held a robust virtual graduation for the graduating class of each campus and the videos and pictures will remain online for the greater part of the year. Due to the COVID-19 funds, VCOM was able to assist its students who had been impacted with the additional money for increased expenses from having to move early for self-quarantine where this was required. VCOM also assisted with graduation expenses that had been incurred by providing a small stipend to each (in the form of a gift card.)

All other events on campus were canceled and the campuses remained closed through the last week of June/first week of July to most faculty and staff.

VCOM informed all that the institution expected students, faculty, and staff to model exceptional professional behavior to safeguard their health, as well as the health of the public. This was accomplished through early recognition of symptoms and signs, and taking timely protective actions that include clinical assessment, minimization of transmission of COVID-19 to others, and reporting their situation to those who are responsible for their learning and well-being.

All OMS 1 and OMS 2 students were notified of the requirement to report if they test positive for COVID-19 to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs who will also convey this information to the Dean.

All OMS 3 and OMS 4 students were notified of the requirement to report if they test positive for COVID-19 to the Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs who will also convey this information to the Dean.

All faculty and staff were notified of the requirement to report if they test positive for COVID-19 to Human Resources who will also convey this information to the President and Campus Dean.

Students, faculty, and staff were required to read the full CDC information on COVID-19. They were also required to avoid exposure to COVID-19 wherever possible.

The CDC recommendations that VCOM students, faculty, and staff have followed to date:
1. All campuses were closed and will remain closed until further notice. Select faculty and staff were allowed on campus for essential duties only.

2. All persons on campus must follow PPE guidelines (cloth masks, frequent hand washing, hand sanitizer, and social distancing); and when returning to the clinical setting (surgical masks, frequent hand washing, social distancing, hand sanitizer, and gloves where indicated).

3. All faculty and staff are directed to actively seek screening if symptoms of COVID-19 occur and must be screened before returning to campus and call the appropriate COVID-19 point of contact listed.

4. Faculty and staff were to notify the COVID-19 point of contact to report exposure to patients under investigation (PUI) or positive coronavirus patients and await further instruction prior to returning to campus even if for emergent matters.

5. Students, faculty, and staff were instructed on the symptoms of infection from COVID-19, ranging from mild to severe.

6. VCOM faculty and staff were instructed on what to do should they begin to have symptoms potentially compatible with COVID-19 infection.

See the next few pages for VCOM’s COVID-19 RESPONSE IN PHOTOS
VCOM’s COVID-19 RESPONSE IN PHOTOS. The following pages are a representation of online events implemented across VCOM campuses to replace significant in-person events such as Match Day, Graduation, and “drive-thru” celebrations created with social distancing for students and graduates.
CONGRATULATIONS

to the 502 members of the VCVM
CLASS OF 2020
who graduated remotely due to COVID-19
We salute you!
DRIVE-THRU FUN

Safe celebrations let the students and graduates know how much we miss their smiling faces and wanted to celebrate their progress!
Section 2

Policies and Procedures for Employees Returning to Campus under COVID-19 Restrictions
Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM)

SECTION 2: Policies and Procedures for EMPLOYEES Returning to Campus Under COVID-19 Restrictions

All instructions in the document are considered to be VCOM Policies and Procedures to be Followed by Faculty and Staff

The policy follows CDC recommendations on opening Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) and the guidance of the states in which the VCOM Campuses are located.

1. Opening Dates:
   a. VCOM first and second-year students will begin their academic program on time, on the dates provided earlier by the academic calendar, however, the first two weeks will be online:
      - OMS 1 Auburn and Louisiana Campuses – July 13, 2020 online instruction only
      - OMS 1 Virginia and Carolinas Campuses – July 20, 2020 online instruction only
      - OMS 2 Auburn Campus – July 15, 2020 online instruction only
      - OMS 2 Virginia and Carolinas Campuses – July 22, 2020 online instruction only

   VCOM first and second-year classes will participate in online learning for the first two weeks. The two-week period of online learning will allow students to have the appropriate self-quarantine time before entering the classroom setting. Students will be required to be living in their campus community a minimum of 10 days in advance of opening for self-quarantine. There will be a “drive-thru” method used for picking up packets, which will also serve to assure that students have arrived on the first day they are required to report to the community.

      - OMS 1 and 2 In-person classes will begin July 27, 2020, in Auburn
      - OMS 1 classes will begin July 27, 2020, in Louisiana
      - OMS 1 and 2 in-person classes will begin August 3, 2020, on the Virginia and Carolinas campuses.

   Actual dates for coming to campus may change to a later date and if they do change, will be listed on the students’ block calendar, posted in the upcoming weeks.

2. Faculty and Staff Returning to Campus: Staged Return
   Faculty and staff will begin returning in early July and will include a staged return extending through August 1 at a minimum. Administration, officers, and essential personnel will return first. All faculty and staff will receive an email on the exact dates for return. Some faculty and staff, depending upon duties will be asked to continue to work from home.

3. Determinations on Ability to Work from Home
   a. Faculty and staff will be deemed by the supervisors as:
      i. able to fully work from home during COVID-19 (exceptions may occur),
      ii. required to work both on campus and from home (splitting the number of days on campus and home to decrease the number of people on campus),
      or
      iii. essential to work on campus every day.
The ability of the employee to provide the duties of the position at home as well as on campus will be deemed appropriate by the Division Officer and the President, and for academic faculty and students, the Campus Dean and the President. The decision may also include the Vice-Provost and Senior Vice President for decision-making.

a. Employees who are providing instruction in the large classroom environment or who will work with multiple students and/or who work in an areas where multiple other employees work are instructed to limit their travel in the following manner:

   i. avoid using public transit
   ii. avoid traveling outside of the state for a minimum of 10 days prior to providing in class instruction, if you have difficulty with this requirement please contact HR. Please note if you normally work is in a bordering state and the trip is considered a routine commute, this does not apply.
   iii. if you MUST travel out of state, avoid exposure to COVID-19 in the following manner:
       • avoid restaurants and use window service
       • do not attend events where larger numbers of persons gather
       • use gloves at the gas stations and other places you are forced to occupy (bathrooms, etc.)
       • do not travel to states where there is an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases
       • avoid returning to campus areas where others will be exposed (i.e.: classroom or areas common to other employees) for a period of 10 days upon return

b. All employees are required to read the information on the CDC website prior to their return and the information and links have been sent to faculty and staff. Please use the following website address to locate the appropriate information:

c. Face masks are required to be worn by everyone in the building. Employees are not required to wear a face mask when in their respective offices if alone, however, they must wear a face mask in their office when others are present. VCOM will provide 3 face masks for each person which may be washed nightly.

d. Hand sanitizing stations will be positioned throughout the building and should be used when touching common areas such as door handles, stair rails, and other frequently touched items.

e. Employees may not share items such as pens, pencils, and other hand-held instruments.

f. Employees who have seen COVID-19 persons in an unprotected manner or persons under investigation in an unprotected manner will not come to campus until enough days have occurred to assure they have not contracted COVID-19 (generally 10 days).
   All students, faculty, and staff are returning to the campus at their own risk. As it is possible for any student, faculty, or staff member to contract COVID-19 at the grocery store, gas station, or other public areas, VCOM assumes no responsibility for any person who may contract COVID-19.
g. It is likely that a student or employee will contract COVID-19 over the next several months and for this to impact and infect one or more persons on campus. VCOM will follow guidelines on cleaning, disinfecting, tracking, and other measures to avoid the spread as much as possible, however, just as in the community, there is no method to totally mitigate this risk except for staying at home. This is the reason persons at high risk must self-report and the reason all employees must assume their own risk for contracting the infection.

h. All faculty and staff must read and complete the attestation forms prior to returning to campus.

4. Vulnerable Faculty and Staff Considered to be At High Risk of Contracting COVID-19
   a. Employees who are considered high-risk due to immunosuppression, kidney disease, lung disorders, diabetes, morbid obesity, or other conditions that might place them at high-risk for complications from COVID-19 are asked to notify Human Resources. This should be information provided by the Employee in the Qualtrix Survey.
   b. In general, employees who qualify as high-risk or vulnerable will be asked to not come to campus until all risk has been fully vetted and a decision made. The decision will be made by the Director of Human Resources, the appropriate Division Officer (Dean, Vice President, or Vice Provost as appropriate), and the President/Provost for all employees. Confidentiality regarding medical conditions is ensured. The Campus Committee may be engaged in the decision making when needed.
   c. Employees who are at high risk for poor outcomes and wish to take a medical leave due to will not be penalized and an alternate work schedule will be made. Alternate work tasks or duties may be given. Employees should work through Human Resources and recognize they may be re-tasked with different job duties during this time so they remain fully employed where possible.
   d. Employees who cannot work from home and who cannot be re-tasked with work that can be performed from home will not be penalized. The employee will be required however to utilize sick days, medical leaves, and other leave procedures that follow the employee handbook processes. The procedures in these cases will follow the normal handbook procedures for employees.
   e. Human Resources will work with all employees to continue employment where employment was planned by the Administration. 
   (Note: If employment was deemed to be no longer possible for reasons outside of being at high-risk for poor outcomes, and the employment was to be discontinued regardless of COVID-19 restrictions, the employment will still be discontinued.)

5. Notifying the Director for Human Resources of Illness
   a. Employees must notify the Director for Human Resources, the COVID-19 point of contact, if they become ill. The notification should be prior to 9 a.m. if at all possible. The employee should also notify their supervisor of the illness by email or phone.
   b. Employees are asked to report to the Director of Human Resources if they are aware of other employees who become ill with COVID-19 symptoms, as appropriate testing must occur.
   c. The employee will receive appropriate instructions for testing, for days appropriate to miss, and required procedures before returning and/or appropriate restrictions from returning if for a COVID-19 like illness.
d. If an employee develops an illness outside of COVID-19 symptoms, he or she must still notify Human Resources and their supervisor on the first morning of the illness. Depending on the type of illness and the number of days required, employees may be required to see a physician and to have an excused absence. (See employee handbook)
e. All employees returning to campus who become ill will be required to report on exposures utilizing a tracking system as provided by the College so to identify and hopefully stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The College may participate in more than one contact tracing system. The employee must also participate in the local health departments contact tracing.

6. WHEN A STUDENT, FACULTY, OR STAFF MEMBER TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19 VIRUS
   a. Appropriate exposure tracking must occur, as well as campus safety measures, which may include the closing of classrooms and laboratories for a day or a certain number of days while additional appropriate cleaning occurs and to allow time to ensure that other students, faculty, or staff do not develop symptoms.
   b. VCOM will be working closely with the health department on testing of employees and appropriate tracking procedures for others in the building who are exposed to an employee who tests positive for COVID-19.

7. NOTIFICATION: When an alteration of the academic schedule or work schedule occurs, notifications to all employees will be utilizing email. Employees are required, therefore, to read their campus emails daily.

8. EVENTS ON CAMPUS
   a. All events on campus must be pre-approved. Only essential group events will be approved and will be limited in number. Groups above 30 are discouraged and groups above 50 are not allowed. When a group up to 50 is allowed, it must be held where appropriate 6-foot social distancing can occur. A plan for any event must be submitted to and approved by Administration and by the COVID-19 Committee.
   b. No conferences or events will be allowed on campus while students are on campus in rooms that students will use. If used for a small event on weekends thorough cleaning must occur.
   c. All student club events will be by ZOOM where possible for the time being.
   d. If a student club believes their event essential to occur on campus, this must be approved by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the COVID-19 Committee in advance, it must be done in a manner where less than 50 people can be present and 6-foot social distancing can occur. Masks must be worn, hand sanitizers used, and other precautions. Only essential events may be held.
   e. No employee large group events will be scheduled on campus.
   f. In the case of rare approval, any event that is approved to be held on campus during this time will be restricted to 50 people and require social distancing and appropriate cleaning.

9. CLASSROOMS AND SCHEDULES
   a. To accommodate classroom instruction for first-year and second-year students, the College will utilize both the traditional theatre style classrooms and the event rooms on campus for instruction. Students will be notified of which classroom they will be assigned to. Presenters will only be in one classroom and may rotate to other classrooms so as to stagger the time with an in-class presenter.
b. The rooms used for instruction will have no more than 50 persons per room (including instructor) and will always follow the 6-foot separation required for students and presenter.

c. The classrooms and event rooms will be used for instruction, as all are needed for one class when practicing social distancing and with less than 50 persons in a room, the first-year and second-year students will be alternated between morning and afternoon classes. The alternating schedule follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.M.</td>
<td>1st years in classroom. 2nd years in laboratories and/or small group areas.</td>
<td>1st years in classroom. 2nd years in laboratories and/or small group areas.</td>
<td>1st years in classroom. 2nd years in laboratories and/or small group areas.</td>
<td>1st years in classroom. 2nd years in laboratories and/or small group areas.</td>
<td>1st years in classroom. 2nd years in laboratories and/or small group areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.M.</td>
<td>2nd years in classroom. 1st years in laboratories and/or small group areas.</td>
<td>2nd years in classroom. 1st years in laboratories and/or small group areas.</td>
<td>2nd years in classroom. 1st years in laboratories and/or small group areas.</td>
<td>2nd years in classroom. 1st years in laboratories and/or small group areas.</td>
<td>2nd years in classroom. 1st years in laboratories and/or small group areas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

d. Laboratories will also be scheduled in a manner that will allow for 6-foot distancing and less than 50 persons per room. Laboratory sessions will include smaller numbers of students and must alternate online instructions for the lab with actual in-person time to gain the most from the labs. Students will be assigned to the same alternating groups for labs to reduce exposure.

e. Classrooms will be cleaned and wiped with disinfectants between classes from 12 noon to 1 p.m., so to clean between the classes being held.

f. The Principles of Primary Care / Osteopathic Manipulation (PPC/OMM) laboratories occur weekly and are required for appropriate learning and instruction in OMM. Students typically learn physical examination techniques as well as osteopathic manipulation techniques and use other students as their “patient.” The laboratories have been modified as follows:

i. The PPC/OMM laboratories will be split into three (3) or four (4) groups so that there are no more than 50 students per laboratory (including instructor(s)).

ii. PPC/OMM laboratories will range from 50 to 80 minutes in length with a minimum of 10 minutes between sessions so that all tables and door handles can be wiped down. Also, this will allow all equipment to be wiped down with disinfectant by the exiting student and again by the incoming student if used. To schedule laboratory time appropriately, labs may run as late as 6 p.m. in the evening.

iii. A VCOM student will be paired with the same student in OMM throughout the block to limit the student’s exposure to only one other individual when close contact is required.

iv. Male and female student pairing may be alternated by block to ensure students have appropriate exposure to both.

v. Tables will be distanced 6 feet apart.
vi. Students will wear appropriate face masks when examining the other student and will utilize appropriate hand washing prior to a laboratory session followed by hand sanitizer each time before and after the laboratory.

g. Student attendance for anatomy laboratory is mandatory. VCOM uses an anatomy dissection laboratory as a part of the required course. Anatomy laboratory dissection will, however, depend on the ability of VCOM to obtain the appropriate number of cadavers under COVID-19 and will be altered to assure the student has the laboratory experience. If an appropriate number of cadavers are not obtained, the anatomy department will utilize prosected cadavers for teaching and study, supplemented with online materials. This will also be the procedure if or when the campus would need to be suddenly closed, using primarily online materials.

i. Anatomy laboratories will be for 50 to 60 minutes and alternate to allow for the required limit to 50 persons to be in the laboratory, including the instructor. Sessions may begin at noon or run through the noon hour to accommodate larger class sizes such as the Virginia class.

ii. Anatomy laboratory will be planned with gloves and masks and not more than 3 persons per table, working to socially distance with a minimum of 4 and up to 6 feet.

iii. Anatomy laboratory sessions may be alternated with small group learning sessions or cases that support the laboratory experience.

iv. Anatomy laboratories may extend up to 6 p.m. when needed to alternate labs for the appropriate number in the session. This is the exception and not the rule.

h. Small group case sessions will consist of as few as 4 and up to 8 students per session depending upon the size of the room and the ability to allow for social distancing in the room. The students in the small group setting must observe a minimum 6-foot separation for social distancing. Masks must be worn as in all other places in the building and hand sanitizer will be provided. Where possible small groups may be required to meet by ZOOM. The academic calendars will reflect the above schedules.

i. Students will only be allowed on campus during the day for the following,
   a. to attend their scheduled class or laboratory
   b. for scheduled individual appointments with a department or faculty member made in advance
   c. to use the library for library services (not for study)

   Students may not study on campus during the day while the campus is under the COVID-19 restrictions as the number of students in the building, hallway, and common spaces must be limited as set forth by some of our states.

j. There will be no on-campus use of standardized patients until further notice. Standardized patients may be used via ZOOM or other online venues for interview and supplemented with simulation for the remainder of such events.

k. Clinical Procedural Skills (CPS) will be held in groups of less than 50 and will utilize 6-foot distancing in the CPS labs.
I. Simulations will continue, however, the number of people in a simulation room will be limited to 3 or less and group waiting will be limited in numbers, so the appropriate social distancing is followed.

m. Students will be informed of available times to meet with faculty and staff and whether the meeting will be conducted in person or by ZOOM.

n. Group meetings with faculty and staff will not be scheduled in-person and will be conducted by ZOOM.

10. **A Plan Exists to Deliver the Curriculum with In-Person Delivery Model alternating with Online Delivery. Online Delivery is to be Prepared for all Curriculum in Advance to Avoid Interruption of Instruction Should a Campus Closure be Required.**

a. All faculty who create materials for classroom instruction are now also required to create online materials and record any instruction required when moving to the online format. This will prevent interruption of the academic schedules should a campus outbreak occur.

b. All faculty from all campuses are required to collaborate on curriculum and curriculum delivery materials so to support the success of all campuses.

c. For classes that do not require mandatory attendance, the materials will be posted and may be used by students who wish to utilize the online format asynchronously in lieu of classroom attendance.

d. For laboratory instruction and other classes with mandatory attendance, faculty will prepare a duplicate online format to deploy in the event that the campus is closed due to COVID-19. However, these materials will only be used if the Campus is closed.

e. Although VCOM has deemed that this type of curriculum delivery to not be ideal for learners, if a disruption of the student’s academic schedule is required (for a period of quarantine or following a new COVID-19 wave, or outbreak on campus) there will not be a delay the student’s education.

11. **INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL EDUCATION EXPERIENCES**

   There will be no international medical experiences or travel for employees until further notice. Faculty and Staff are requested to avoid international travel and/or must self-quarantine in the campus community following the travel using leave or vacation time for the self-quarantine period, prior to returning to campus.

12. **PARKING LOTS**

   a. Faculty and staff should not congregate in the parking lots and should practice social distancing.

13. **ENTRYWAY TO BUILDINGS AND USE OF HALLWAYS ON CAMPUS**

   a. Employees and students must put on their face mask prior to entering the building.

   b. Employees and students must use six-foot social distancing when they enter and leave the building.

   c. Social distancing will be practiced and employees are not to congregate in the entryway and must use six feet distance while entering. The doors will be unlocked / open for a period of 30 minutes to an hour prior to the 8 a.m. start time and the 1 p.m. start time so to enter properly and to assure their safety.

   d. All employees must use card swipe for entrance. Employees must practice social distancing outside the facility in addition to inside the facility. Students and faculty are asked to avoid congregating in the foyer prior to entry to the classroom.
e. Employees are to self-screen on entry, to notify the receptionist on the door they are entering if deemed to be at risk by their self-screen.

f. Each employee must use hand sanitizer upon entering the building and should use it often if going to other floors or areas of the building, when handling doorknobs, elevator buttons, stair rails, and other items throughout the day.

g. Employees and students must social distance when using stairs, elevators, and common areas. Markings will be provided to assist with social distancing.

h. Employees and students may not gather in the hallways between classes.

i. The capacity of restrooms is limited to the number of people in the stalls and two persons waiting to appropriately self-distance. For this reason, to avoid congregating by bathrooms, employees should use bathrooms at times students are not on break.

j. Visitors to the building must be scheduled in advance and require an escort by the person with whom they are meeting. Visitors are limited to those that are essential. Employees should not invite a visitor without first consulting their supervisor.

k. VCOM third-year and fourth-year students will be restricted from campus except on a one-by-one basis, so it will not impact the number of students on campus at this time.

14. STUDY SPACES AND LIBRARY

a. The online library is available as before.

b. Limited use of the library space will be allowed for in-person study after 5 p.m. in the evening. Students must sign up to use these rooms. If reserved, library small study rooms may only be used by two students at a time to allow for social distancing. **Studying by students during the COVID-19 pandemic should be done at home.**

c. Studying on campus will be limited to evenings during the COVID-19 restrictions, and students must sign up for study space in advance each day.

d. Again during COVID-19 restrictions and until further notice, students will only be allowed on campus during the day for study and only during their required academics. This is in order to follow both the CDC and the Governors/states restrictions on social distancing and the number of people in a room or building.

e. VCOM facilities will be closed nightly Monday through Thursday by 10 p.m. and on Friday, Saturday by 8 p.m. and on Sunday by 10 p.m. to allow for appropriate cleaning of the building.

15. PATIO AND OUTSIDE SPACE

a. Employees may use the patios but should practice appropriate social distancing as recommended.

b. Employees may use the lawns, exercise tracks, and parking lots as appropriate, however, social distancing must be followed.

c. The patio tables will be wiped down prior to the day, at noon, and at 6 p.m.

16. RESEARCH SPACE will be assessed and discussed individually and in a separate document.

17. CLEANING AND DISINFECTING OF THE CAMPUS.

a. The buildings will be cleaned each night and fully disinfected.

b. Classrooms will be wiped down at noon each day.

c. Faculty and staff will be required to wipe down their desks, chairs, doorknobs, and other surfaces frequently during the day (used items/areas) and each night before leaving and
are encouraged to wipe them down several times during the day. Disinfectant wipes will be provided.

d. Further information on cleaning of the building will be published by facilities.

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT ALL DOCUMENTS POSTED ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE STATE AND THE HEALTH DEPARTMENTS, AS WELL AS OUR ACCREDITING BODIES. ALL DOCUMENTS POSTED ARE THEREFORE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AND FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS WILL BE NOTIFIED OF SUCH CHANGES.
Section 3

Policies and Procedures for Students Returning to Campus under COVID-19 Restrictions
SECTION 3: Plans, Policies, and Procedures for OMS-1 and OMS-2 students Returning to Campus under COVID-19 Restrictions

This document outlines the plan, policies, and procedures for VCOM students returning to campus while under COVID-19 procedures and restrictions. The policy follows CDC recommendations on opening Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) and the guidance of the states in which the VCOM Campuses are located.

1. OPENING DATES
   A. VCOM first and second-year students will begin their academic program on time, on the dates provided earlier by the academic calendar; however, the first two weeks will be online:
      • OMS 1 Auburn and Louisiana Campuses - July 13, 2020
      • OMS 1 Virginia and Carolinas Campuses - July 20, 2020
      • OMS 2 Auburn Campus – July 15, 2020
      • OMS 2 Virginia and Carolinas Campuses – July 22, 2020

   VCOM first and second-year classes will participate in online learning for the first two weeks and will not begin in-person classes until July 27, 2020 (Auburn and Louisiana) and August 3, 2020 (Virginia and Carolinas). Actual dates for coming to campus will be listed on the students’ block calendar, which will be posted in the upcoming weeks.

   The two-week period of online learning will allow students to have the appropriate self-quarantine time before entering the classroom setting. Students will be required to be living in their campus community a minimum of 10 days in advance of opening for self-quarantine. There will be a “drive-thru” method used for picking up packets, which will also serve to ensure that students have arrived on the first day they are required to report to the community.

2. STUDENTS RETURNING TO CAMPUS JULY 2020
   A. Students will be required to read the COVID-19 information on the CDC website prior to their return to campus. Information/education regarding required sections of COVID-19 information to learn will be provided to incoming students as a part of their orientation packet and two second-year students as a part of the online materials for the first two weeks of class. Faculty are preparing the educational curriculum on COVID-19 for both first and second-year classes.
   B. Students will be provided with a document of instructions for the return to campus and directed to the plan online. When students return, a class representative will be added to the COVID-19 Campus Committees for communication purposes.
   C. The documents provided to students include a required form to complete and to self-identify if they are a vulnerable person at increased risk from complications of COVID-19 so the College can assist in limiting their exposure. Students are informed by the materials that
they will not be penalized if they take an academic leave to delay their return until the next year; however, students must apply for this leave no later than the first day of class.

D. All students will be provided with appropriate washable face masks and with their first bottle of hand sanitizer on the first day of class. **Face masks are required by everyone in the building.** Students will receive their face masks during the “drive-thru” and pick up of packets on the first day scheduled back to the community. In addition to the **bottle of hand sanitizer, hand sanitizing stations** will be positioned throughout the building and should be used when touching common areas such as door handles, stair rails, and other frequently touched items. Students are **instructed not to share items** such as pens, pencils, and other hand-held instruments.

E. **Students are instructed not to come to campus if ill and to notify the Associate Dean for Student Affairs**, who serves and their COVID-19 contact on their campus.

F. All students, faculty, and staff are returning to the campus at their own risk. As it is possible for any student, faculty, or staff member to contract COVID-19 at the grocery store, gas station, or other public areas, VCOM assumes no responsibility for any person who may contract COVID-19 on campus. VCOM does however, assume the responsibility **to educate students on transmission, symptoms, and techniques to avoid exposure.**

G. All faculty, staff, and students must read and complete the attestation forms regarding this education prior to returning to campus, to prevent exposing others.

3. **HIGH-RISK STUDENTS**

Students who are considered high-risk due to immunosuppression, kidney disease, lung disorders, diabetes, morbid obesity, or any other conditions that might place them as immunosuppressed or at high-risk for complications from COVID-19 are asked to notify the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and not come to campus until all risk has been fully vetted and a decision made regarding the student’s ability to return to campus. The decision will be made by the Associate Dean, the Campus Dean, and the President /Provost for students. Confidentiality regarding medical conditions is ensured. Students who are at increased risk will not be penalized for delaying their education. VCOM will work with the student if an academic leave is not desired to establish an alternate plan (such as a research year).

4. **NOTIFYING THE ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS OF ILLNESS**

A. STUDENTS are instructed that they are **NOT ALLOWED TO BE ON CAMPUS IF ILL.**

B. First or second-year students who become ill with COVID-19 symptoms are required to notify the COVID-19 point of contact, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, regardless of if they will be missing a mandatory learning activity. The notification may be by **phone but should be followed by an email and made at the onset of becoming ill.**

   The notification should be prior to 8 a.m. if at all possible.

   i. The Associate Dean will also notify the Office of Medical Education that they will be missing a mandatory learning activity.

C. **If a student becomes ill with any of the COVID-19 symptoms,** appropriate testing for COVID-19 must occur.

D. Students are also asked to report if they are aware of other students who become ill with COVID-19 symptoms, so the College may reach out to assist the student. Both of these measures will help to keep the campus safe for all students.
E. An ill student will receive appropriate instructions for testing, the minimum number of days appropriate to miss, and testing procedures required before returning to class and/or appropriate restrictions from returning if for a COVID-19 like illness. (see section J. that follows)

5. WHEN A STUDENT TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19 VIRUS
   A. Assistance with identifying appropriate medical care for students will be provided by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, who is the student point of contact for COVID-19.
   B. When a student, faculty, or staff member test positive on campus, appropriate exposure or contact tracking must occur, as well as other campus safety measures, which may include temporary closing of classrooms, laboratory, or classroom space for a while additional appropriate cleaning occurs.
   C. Individual leave time for students and employees exposed will be allowed/ensured to monitor for any other students, faculty, or staff who might develop symptoms.
   D. Temporary campus or classroom closures may be required from time to time.

6. TESTING AND CONTACT TRACING
   VCOM will work closely with the local health department on testing of employees and appropriate tracking procedures for others in the building who are exposed to an employee who tests positive for COVID-19. A member of the health department has been invited to sit on each Campus Committee or to serve as a liaison, whichever is the most convenient for the health department member.

7. TEMPORARY CLOSURE NOTIFICATIONS
   When an alteration of the academic schedule is required, all students will be notified utilizing email. Students must, therefore, read their campus emails daily. (Also see the Communication Plan)

8. EVENTS ON CAMPUS:
   A. All events on campus must be pre-approved by the administration (who will consult the Committee when in question).
   B. Only essential group events will be approved and will be limited in number to less than 50.
   C. No conferences or events will be allowed on campus while students are on the campus for classes.
   D. All student club events will be by ZOOM where possible until further notice.
      i. If a student club believes their event is essential to occur on campus, the event must be approved by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs in advance, and will be done in consultation with the Committee. Regardless of approvals the Committee will uphold the less than 50 people, face masks, and 6-foot social distancing requirements. Only essential events will be approved.
   E. No employee large group events will be scheduled on campus.
   F. In the case of rare approval of a larger event, numbers will be restricted to 50 people and require social distancing and appropriate cleaning.

9. CLASSROOMS, SCHEDULES, and ATTENDANCE
   The attendance policy has been relaxed and for classes that do not require mandatory in-person attendance. All learning materials will be posted in Canvas and may be used by students who wish to utilize the online format in lieu of classroom attendance for the
curriculum approved for asynchronous learning. The ability for a student to choose in-person versus online attendance will be designated for each learning activity on the academic calendar. The learning events requiring attendance will be designated as Mandatory. Students must attend all mandatory learning activities unless they are ill. The learning events that do not require attendance will be designated as Asynchronous Learning. The Academic Calendar will clearly mark between the mandatory and synchronous learning.

10. CLASSROOMS
A. To accommodate classroom instruction for first-year and second-year students, the College has determined to use all space possible for learning, including the traditional theatre-style classrooms and event rooms on campus for instruction. Students will be notified which classroom they will be assigned to. Presenters will only be in one classroom, however may rotate to other rooms so provide in-person on alternating days.

B. The rooms used for instruction will have no more than 50 persons per room including instructor and a 6-foot separation of students will be provided.

C. In addition to the classrooms and event rooms use for instruction, as all such rooms will be needed for one class to receive instruction while practicing social distancing (and to keep less than 50 persons in a room), the first year and second-year students will be alternated between morning and afternoon classes.

An example of the alternating schedule follows:

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<th>Monday</th>
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<td>P.M.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1st years in laboratories</td>
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</table>

(The above is a proposed example of limiting one class at a time in the building. The actual schedules will be on the academic calendar.)

D. All laboratories will also be scheduled in a manner that will allow for 6-foot distancing between tables and less than 50 persons per room.

E. Students may be exposed to one or two other students as their lab partner(s), however this will be the same student all semester and students will practice strict hygiene practices.

Examples:

a. In anatomy there will be 2 or 3 students per cadaver and students are to social distance appropriately with one student dissecting and 2 observing/inspecting the dissection. The person performing the dissection will rotate each fifteen minutes between the 3 students. Students will provide time for the other students to inspect the dissection throughout the time.
b. Laboratory sessions may run up to 6 p.m. or through the lunch hour if required in order to accommodate laboratory need and alternating groups.

F. All classrooms will be cleaned and wiped with disinfectants between classes from 12 noon to 1 p.m. Laboratories will also be cleaned between groups and may involve student participation in wiping/disinfecting surfaces they will be using prior to use.

G. The Principles of Primary Care / Osteopathic Manipulation laboratories occur weekly and are required for appropriate learning and instruction to occur that students must know for board exams and to practice osteopathic medicine, and as well as for accreditation. This is a hands-on examination and treatment that cannot be taught full online.

Students typically learn physical examination techniques and osteopathic manipulation techniques using other students as the “patient.” The laboratories have therefore been modified to be as safe as possible using the following methods:

a. The laboratories will be split into three (3) or four (4) groups so that there are no more than 50 students will be in the laboratory at one time, (including instructor(s)).

b. PPC/OMM laboratories will be approximately 50 minutes in length with a minimum of 10 minutes between sessions so that all tables and door handles can be wiped down. (Exact length of times may vary and will be those listed on the academic calendar).

c. The ten minutes between classes will allow all equipment and tables to be wiped with disinfectant by both the exiting student and the incoming student. To schedule all students in a laboratory time appropriately, labs may run up to 6 p.m. in the evening.

d. A VCOM student will be paired with the same student in OMM throughout the entire block to limit the student’s exposure to only one other individual where such close contact is required. Students will wear masks, use hand sanitizer, and must clean tables prior to use as well as after use.

e. Male and female student pairing may alternate by blocks to ensure students have appropriate exposure to both.

f. Tables will be distanced 6 feet apart and a head-toe arrangement will be used to further distance.

g. Students will wear appropriate face masks when examining the other student and will utilize appropriate hand washing prior to a laboratory session followed by hand sanitizer each time before and after the laboratory.

H. ANATOMY LABORATORY

Student attendance for anatomy laboratory is mandatory. VCOM uses an anatomy dissection laboratory as a part of the required course. Anatomy laboratory dissection will; however, depend on the ability of VCOM to obtain the appropriate number of cadavers under COVID-19. If an appropriate number is not obtained, the anatomy department will provide prosected cadavers for study, supplemented with online materials. This will also be the procedure if or when the campus would need to be suddenly closed, using primarily online materials.

a. Anatomy laboratories will be for 50 minutes (and some up to 70 minutes) and will be alternated with anatomy cases and online virtual anatomy software. This will
allow the instructors to ensure there are no more than the required limit of 50 persons to be in the laboratory, including the instructor.

b. Appropriate masks and gloves will be worn in all anatomy laboratories.

c. Anatomy laboratories may extend up to 6 p.m. when needed to alternate labs for the appropriate number in the session.

I. Small group case sessions will consist of approximately 6, and no more than 8, students per session if in a larger conference room and no greater than 3 or 4 in a smaller conference room. The number will depend upon the size of the room being used and the ability to allow for 6-foot social distancing in the room. The students in the small group setting must observe a minimum 6-foot separation for social distancing. Masks must be worn in the rooms as in all other places in the building.

J. Campus Hours. The academic calendars will reflect the above schedules. Students will only be on campus during a scheduled class and laboratory time during the day unless they have an individual appointment with a department (such as CIFFS, the registrar or financial aid) and all appointments that must be made in advance.

a. Students may not study on campus during the day while the campus is under the COVID-19 restrictions as set forth by some of our states the number of persons in the building must be kept lower as well as social distancing observed.

b. Students may sign up to use the library between 5 p.m. and closing times however this number may be limited. (See new closing times of the campus to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays). Other areas for study will be considered upon the request of students and made available if possible in a safe manner. These will be limited to those that allow social distancing and those that can be cleaned nightly.

K. SIMULATION CENTERS.

a. Standardized Patient Exams: There will be no on-campus use of standardized patients until further notice. Standardized patients may be used via ZOOM for telemedicine interviews and supplemented with simulation until restrictions are removed.

b. Clinical Procedural Skills (CPS) will be held in groups of less than 50 and will utilize 6-foot distancing in the CPS labs.

c. Simulations will continue; however, the number of people in a simulation room will be limited to 3 or less (the number that allows social distancing) and group waiting will be limited in numbers and appropriate social distancing followed. Telemedicine is being substituted where possible.

L. SCHEDULED APPOINTMENTS

Students will be informed of available times to meet with faculty and staff and whether the meeting will be conducted in person or by ZOOM. Group meetings with faculty and staff will not be scheduled in-person and/or will be conducted by ZOOM.

M. INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL EDUCATION EXPERIENCES

There will be no international medical experiences or travel for first and second-year VCOM students until further notice.

N. TRAVEL If you travel home for Christmas or other holidays, follow the CDC guidelines closely: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-in-the-us.html
VCOM will schedule self-quarantine times after block breaks and holiday breaks.

O. PARKING LOTS
Students should not congregate in the parking lots and should practice social distancing.

P. ENTRYWAY TO BUILDINGS AND USE OF HALLWAYS ON CAMPUS
Employees and students must put on their face mask prior to entering the building.
Social distancing is to be practiced on all entryways.
   a. Entrances will be designated for student groups to prevent congregating in the entryway and practice 6 feet distancing during entry.
   b. The doors will be unlocked / open for a period of an appropriate period of time each morning prior to the 8 a.m. start time for first years and again for 30 minutes prior to the 1 p.m. start time. Students will be informed of which doorway and time to arrive so that social distancing can occur. Students should not miss their time period to arrive and wait until the last minute or risk being late. Students must social distance outside and not congregate in the foyer prior to entry to the classroom. Social distancing markers will be used.
   c. Each student must wear a mask and must use hand sanitizer upon entering the building and should use it often between classes if going to other floors or areas of the building, when handling doorknobs, elevator buttons, stair rails, and other items throughout the day.
   d. Employees and students must social distance when using stairs, elevators, and common areas.
   e. Employees and students may not gather or congregate in the hallways between classes.

Q. RESTROOMS
The capacity of restrooms is limited to the number of people in the stalls and two persons waiting, to appropriately self-distance.

R. VISITORS
Visitors to the building must be scheduled in advance and require an escort by the person with whom they are meeting. Visitors are limited to those that are essential.

S. VCOM third-year and fourth-year students will be restricted from campus except on a one-by-one basis, so it will not impact the number of students on campus at this time.

T. STUDY SPACES AND LIBRARY
   a. The online library is available as before.
   b. Limited use of the library for in-person study will be allowed and limited to the evening.
   c. Limited other study spaces may be provided; however, students must sign up to use these rooms for study, including the library.
   d. If reserved, library small study rooms may only be used by two students to allow for social distancing.
   e. Studying during the COVID-19 pandemic should be done at home whenever possible.
   f. Again during COVID-19 restrictions and until further notice students will only be allowed on campus during the day at the time of their required academics or for scheduled meetings. (This is in order to follow both the CDC and the Governors/states restrictions on social distancing and number of people in a room or building.)
g. VCOM facilities will be closed by 10 p.m. nightly and 8 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays so as to allow for appropriate cleaning of the building.

U. PATIO AND OUTSIDE SPACE
   a. Students may use the patios, but should practice appropriate social distancing as recommended.
   b. Students may use the lawns, exercise tracks, and parking lots as appropriate, however, social distancing must be followed.
   c. The patio tables will be wiped down prior to the day, at noon, and at 6 p.m.

V. CLEANING AND DISINFECTING OF THE CAMPUS.
   a. The buildings will be cleaned each night and fully disinfected.
   b. Classrooms will be wiped down each evening and at noon each day.
   c. Students may not study in classrooms.
   d. Further information on cleaning of the building will be published by facilities.

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT ALL DOCUMENTS POSTED ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE STATE AND THE HEALTH DEPARTMENTS, AS WELL AS OUT ACCREDITING BODIES. ALL DOCUMENTS POSTED ARE THEREFORE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AND FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS WILL BE NOTIFIED OF SUCH CHANGES.
Section 3b

The History and Current Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic March 2020 through June 1, 2020

and

Policies for All OMS-3 and OMS-4 Beginning or Returning to Rotations
SECTION 3b - EDWARD VIA COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE (VCOM)

THIS DOCUMENT INCLUDES THE HISTORY AND CURRENT VCOM RESPONSE
TO COVID 19 PANDEMIC MARCH 2020 THROUGH JUNE 1 2020 BY VCOM
AND POLICIES FOR ALL VCOM OMS-3 AND OMS-4 STUDENTS
BEGINNING OR RETURNING TO ROTATIONS.

VCOM STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO READ AND ABIDE BY THE POLICIES
HEREIN, COMPLETE THE REQUIRED CURRICULUM AND TRAINING,
AND SIGN THE REQUIRED FORMS BEFORE BEGINNING OR RETURNING TO
OMS 3 AND OMS 4 ROTATIONS.

**History:** In the wake of the COVID 19 Pandemic, the medical education of the VCOM students, with minimal disruption, remained a critical concern by VCOM, however, this was balanced with the critically important value placed on student wellness and safety, which remains VCOM’s primary concern. Additionally, the wellness of VCOM faculty and staff are a primary concern of VCOM.

In the wake of the COVID crisis, on March 13, 2020, VCOM students were pulled from their clinical rotation educational program, including both third-year and fourth-year medical students. By March 16th all medical students had been removed from the clinical environment across the country following the recommendations of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) and the American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC) as well as other leading medical associations. The Department of Education and the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation also issued statements of guidance in allowing changes in the curriculum for and standards for on-line learning.

**VCOM first year and second year medical students** were removed from class and all curriculum was placed on line by Monday, March 16. The VCOM campuses were closed restricting access to essential faculty and staff to support faculty and student activities. The faculty and staff who remained on campus were those required periodically for preparing and providing exam days and those who supported the administration of exams and were instructed in practicing social distancing for the two weeks (or less) that were required to assure the students could complete the current blocks (blocks 3 and 7). Blocks 4 and 8 were quickly moved to on-line curriculum. Many creative curriculums were developed by faculty and staff which will likely be used long after the COVID-19 pandemic resolves. VCOM is very proud of the efforts and work of the faculty and staff during this response.

The **VCOM fourth-year medical students** had 6 weeks of education remaining and were provided with online clinical education matching the content of the clinical education that had been scheduled. Education on caring for patients with COVID-19 was also provided during this time. Students who met graduation requirements by the end of the six weeks were graduated. VCOM held a robust virtual
graduation for each campus and assisted VCOM students with the additional moving expenses from early self-quarantine that was required and graduation expenses that may have been incurred by providing a small stipend to each in the form of a gift card.

The VCOM third-year medical students were removed from clinical rotations and were provided with online education for the clinical rotation they were completing and additional core rotations they were to complete before the end of the academic year. VCOM remained concerned about the clinical education experiences of the OMS-3 students, and therefore moved the fourth-year required research course into the OMS-3 year for students to complete on-line in June and moved the required OMS3 year rotation that would be missed to the OMS-4 year. The schedule was also supplemented with educational resources for COVID-19 education.

At this time, many unanswered questions remain nationally about the proper way to restore on-campus education, as well as some for clinical education, which is affected by the location of the site and the policies of the clinical partners. Over the next few months VCOM, along with other higher education institutions across the country, will follow the best possible advice of the CDC on reopening of Institutions of Higher Learning (IHE). Documents with guidance from national and state authorities are found on-line, and continue to be discussed in all higher education realms. VCOM will follow the advice of the local and state health departments and the governor’s office in the state where each campus resides as well as those in the states where the VCOM core clinical training sites are located. VCOM students will be returned to the clinical environment as clinical rotations are made available for the rising OMS-3 and OMS-4 students in the safest environment that can be offered. Certain hospital clinical learning environments responsible for core VCOM clinical rotations have not re-opened to medical student education at this time and many will likely not open for student education this year (emergency rooms, ICU environments where COVID patients are being cared for, urgent care centers, nursing homes, and other high-risk environments). In addition, ensuring availability of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) will be an important key to re-opening clinical education, as will be ensuring appropriate student education and training related to COVID-19 and the appropriate fit and use of PPE prior to the students’ return.

Appropriate PPE will initially be made available for medical students returning to the clinical learning environment before beginning direct patient care. If PPE becomes unavailable, non-patient care assignments will be made. VCOM students will be educated to work in this new environment where provider and staff infection may occur from caring for severely ill patients and students will be provided with education for dealing with the psychological effects of the COVID-19 pandemic as well. Therefore, VCOM rising third and fourth-year medical students will be educated on COVID 19 patient care, on appropriate PPE usage prior to return and on managing the psychological effects of COVID 19 for patients, their families, and the students’ own psychological well-being.

In addition, as the OMS-4 students return to the clinical rotations, they will be educated on how to properly frame their disrupted medical education experience when interviewing for residency positions. Students must be able to voice understanding of the alternative program, what they have learned from the experience, and how they have grown. This will be imperative when interviewing with residency programs as it is the expectation of medical students by the rest of the clinical world, to serve and adapt during this time. The document as well as discussions by the VCOM psychologists and faculty will reinforce these expectations.
Returning VCOM medical students to the clinical learning environment will be even more complex and is impacted by the following:

1. The ability of the core clinical teaching sites to maintain a safe and stable learning environment,
2. The clinical faculty’s ability to deliver the curriculum under the current clinical environment,
3. The demands currently being placed upon the health care system
4. The requirements set forth by the local, state, and national health officials
5. The requirements set forth by the accrediting bodies nationally
6. The ability to return students in a relatively safe manner

Therefore, the Campus Deans and the Associate Deans for OMS-3 and OMS-4 years, along with their clinical chairs, must assess the current clinical sites, review the updated COVID-19 data, and determine the ability of the site to provide the clinical education, the ability access appropriate PPE, and then complete their own risk assessment as to the students’ ability to return to the site. This must be done in a changing environment as various phases of COVID 19 return to normalcy (or the new normal) as set forth by each state and the recommendations by local, state, and national health authorities. In addition, data about the predicted peak in the community, the readiness of the clinical facility and the safety of students and faculty, should be the most important part of guiding these dynamic decisions. A “one VCOM” educational approach does not exist across campuses (located in different geographic areas) or across the clinical training sites for any one campus, given the tremendous variances of affiliated core clinical teaching locations of the four VCOM campuses. All Campus Deans and Associate Deans are working together for the betterment of the student education as a whole.

There will be differences between teaching locations, however, VCOM is seeking to create equitable student experiences across campuses wherever possible. There will be some variance of experiences, however, even when working to achieve the equitable experiences for any one campus or across campuses. Despite the geographic variances, VCOM will seek to ensure the education of its third and fourth-year medical students is of high quality and VCOM will seek to assure students (who are not already on an altered degree schedule ADPOS) will able to graduate on time. VCOM is hopeful the changes implemented in the student’s schedule will allow all students to graduate on time, however the future and the actions of external regulating bodies cannot be fully predicted at this time.

VCOM’s initial focus will be to utilize appropriate guidelines for returning to campus and appropriate clinical learning resources (sites) as they become available for clinical education of students in the safest manner possible. The timing, sequencing, and educational requirements for the OMS-3 and OMS-4 students has been changed and a new required rotation schedule developed for each class to assure students will be able to meet graduation requirements.

It is important to provide the notification that all VCOM students will be restricted from working in the Emergency Departments, except those offered as residency audition rotations and if working in the Emergency Department on an audition rotation, the student should still avoid caring for the COVID-19 patients. VCOM ICU experiences are now limited to those where the care of COVID-19 patients is not required. Students are not allowed to work in urgent care centers, nursing homes as there is a likelihood of daily exposure to COVID-19 patients in these environments. These restrictions remain in place until further notice.

Nationally it has been determined that students should not work in hospitals who become stressed by an excess of COVID 19 patients and there remains a need to use less stressed sites more extensively in
order to conserve on the PPE equipment for these sites, as students are considered learners and not essential employees.

To assure students may meet their educational requirements and graduate on time, the VCOM Curriculum Oversight Committee have reviewed and altered the curricular requirements for OMS 3 and OMS 4 2020-21 academic year. The new requirements will apply to students on altered degree plans where required to avoid delay in their programs to graduate on dates that are appropriate to match to residency programs.

VCOM OMS 4 Curricular Changes

For VCOM OMS-4 students, where the prior VCOM curriculum required 5 electives, 4 VCOM selected clinical experiences, and 1 required Emergency Medicine (EM) rotation; VCOM will now require 4 electives and 4 selective rotations to allow for appropriate self-quarantine between experiences where this is required. The selective rotations include one surgical selective, one medical selective, and two additional selective rotations. (The selective rotations include those scheduled in order make up requirements in periods 10 and 11). Emergency Medicine and ICU clinical rotations will no longer be required and educational objectives will be met through online learning modules delivered on-line during periods of self-quarantine between clinical rotations when quarantines are required. (If Geriatrics was to be made up in the OMS-4 year, the student will be required to complete those on-line modules while on another selective). The additional on-line curriculum to be completed during the self-quarantine periods includes the Emergency Medicine and Critical Care curriculum and certain additional curriculums that have been developed.

While the required Emergency Medicine rotation has been eliminated in VCOM sites for the OMS-4 class for the academic year July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021; students who are seeking an EM residency and who are still be offered an “audition rotation” by emergency medicine residency programs are allowed to complete such rotations if the rotations are still being offered by the program and students avoid COVID-19 patient care. The student should be aware that many institutions where residencies exist are following recommendations made by a national committee and have limited if not restricted student exposure in emergency rooms and ICUs where COVID-19 patients are cared for in order to protect the clinical environment, the students, and the patients in these institutions. Students should assure these rotations scheduled prior still exist.

If an elective rotation has been canceled students must work with the Associate Dean for OMS 4 and GME and the Director for OMS-4 rotations to reschedule their OMS-4 year. Some residency programs are offering Virtual Rotations and these rotations will be reviewed and approved (or not approved) by the Associate Dean for OMS-4 and GME.

OMS 4 students should also be aware that they will likely only be able to schedule one or two rotations through the VSLO system and so students must depend upon VCOM core sites where residencies exist for the other audition electives in order to be seen by the most residency programs.
Additional educational experiences that will benefit the student’s education and preparation for residency including ultrasound courses, residency prep courses for certain specialties, and other preparations that are not in the clinical sites are being developed. Education on the use of telemedicine is also being explored and will be developed when possible.

For each VCOM core clinical education site, VCOM Directors of Student Medical Education and VCOM credentialed clinical faculty will be interviewed by the Associate Deans and the Clinical Chairs to assure VCOM students can safely return to the clinical learning environment in their sites.

**VCOM OMS-3 Curriculum Changes:**

For VCOM OMS-3 students, VCOM has set new requirements to complete the OMS-3 academic year for 2020-2021. The new required OMS-3 academic curriculum for students is as follows: one family medicine rotation, one pediatric rotation, one OB/Gyn rotation, one surgery rotation, two internal medicine rotations, one rural primary care rotation, and one psychiatry clinical rotation. Students will have a 10-day self-quarantine period between the clinical rotation experiences that begins with the final Friday of the prior rotation and students will be required to complete online educational requirements during the week of self-quarantine. The elective rotation is no longer possible to offer and has been eliminated. The Geriatric rotation, previously required included a nursing home setting, which are no longer available for student education at this time and so has been eliminated. Care of Geriatric patients will be included within the OMS 3 Internal Medicine education during the upcoming OMS-3 year.

The Foundations of Clinical Medicine I (FCM I) requirements will continue to occur at the beginning of the semester and the student should self-quarantine in the community of their core site during this period while completing required on-line work. The Foundations of Clinical Medicine II (FCM II) will be split into two individual weeks. The first week of FCM II will be immediately following the semester break and students must return to the community of their core site so to self-quarantine for a minimum of 10 days before resuming clinical rotations and while completing the FCM II curriculum. The FCM II course will follow the final week of the last required rotation and will include the preparation for COMLEX CE and the COMSAE exam.

The Clinical Chairs and faculty have been charged with providing an online curriculum for the 10-day self-quarantine period between both OMS-3 rotations and OMS-4 rotations that will enhance the student’s medical knowledge component of the rotation. Educators across the country have been required to rethink how clinical educational experiences will be delivered, and VCOM’s focus remains a quality learning experience for all students to prepare its students for future residency and clinical practice. VCOM will assure all OMS 3 and OMS 4 students meet the educational requirements that assure clinical medical knowledge and clinical skills competencies according to those defined to complete both OMS-3 and OMS-4 years. It is also expected that the VCOM medical students, as adult learners, will assume responsibility for their personal learning throughout this process.

VCOM is researching additional new delivery methods including the use of telehealth and virtual rotations as alternate clinical learning environments should an interruption in clinical rotations occur again in the future.
All OMS 3 and OMS 4 students are hereby notified of the requirement to report if they test positive for COVID-19 to the Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs and/or the Associate Dean for OMS-4 and GME.

Alert to the Policy Effective for 2020-2021 for Away Rotations for OMS-4 students: For the 2020-2021 academic year, according to national guidelines, rotations outside of the VCOM core clinical sites will be generally discouraged except those required for residency audition rotations where the away rotations are important for learners who have a specialty interest outside of the residencies provided within the VCOM core hospital sites, for military students, or for students who seek residency sites where spouses are located or child care will be provided. VCOM students will likely only be able to schedule limited rotations through VSLO and should plan to also schedule audition electives within the VCOM core sites. A separate policy has been established and will be provided in a letter students may share with residency sites when required for scheduling their audition rotations.

Online Interviews for Residency: Where online interviews for residency are provided, students should seek to interview early in the cycle utilizing the online interview process rather than in-person interviews which are being discouraged by many. Ultimately, at this time, whether the interview process will be in-person or virtual is up to each residency site.

AAMC has created a site regarding interview tips for OMS-4 students: [https://www.aamc.org/system/files/2020-05/Virtual_Interview_Tips_for_Applicants_05072020_1.pdf](https://www.aamc.org/system/files/2020-05/Virtual_Interview_Tips_for_Applicants_05072020_1.pdf)

POLICY ON OMS-3 and OMS-4 STUDENT SELF CARE
When clinical rotations resume, students in clinical education should not report to their approved clinical education sites if they are experiencing any of the following:

- Have a fever
- New onset cough or shortness of breath
- Have been exposed to a positive COVID-19 patient without appropriate protections
- Have had direct contact with someone who is under investigation for a diagnosis of COVID-19 outside of the current rotation they are on or where appropriate protections were not provided. Students must avoid being a vector for this illness.

Students in the above situation must seek immediate educational and attendance guidance from the following:

- The clinical faculty member with whom they are rotating
- The site coordinator and DSME (if in a VCOM core site) **and**
- Must notify the appropriate Director for Clinical Rotations and appropriate Associate Dean of their status

Students who contract COVID-19 or who become a person under investigation for COVID-19 must notify their Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs for their campus or the Associate Dean for OMS 4 and GME, whichever is appropriate for their year of training. **These Associate Deans serve as the COVID-19 officer for the OMS 3 and OMS 4 students.**

**VCOM Students and Clinical Faculty and Administrators must be aware of and follow the CDC recommendations for all clinical providers to minimize the spread of the infection. These recommendations also apply to the clinical learning environment and include:**
1. Follow PPE guidelines.
2. Actively screen everyone for symptoms of COVID-19 before they enter a practice or health care facility.
3. Implement comprehensive source control for all, regardless of symptoms, to prevent transmission from asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic individuals. (Note: cloth masks may be appropriate for patients or visitors in this setting, but they should not be considered appropriate workforce PPE.)
4. Forego contact tracing for exposures in favor of universal source control for HCP and screening for fever and symptoms before every shift in areas with heightened community transmission.
5. Establish a reporting method to public health authorities for patients under investigation (PUI) or positive coronavirus patients.
6. Read the full Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations and the Strategies for Optimizing PPE.

VCOM students should also be aware of the following actions that have been recommended to medical providers to preserve protective equipment and patient care supplies, to ensure staff and patient safety, and to expand available hospital capacity during the COVID-19 pandemic. Students should be observant of those that apply to the practices where they are learning, however, leave the advice to the teaching physicians on such matters. Advice to the providers was to: Delay all elective ambulatory provider visits; reschedule elective and non-urgent admissions; delay inpatient and outpatient elective surgical and procedural cases; and to urge patients to postpone routine dental and eyecare visits.

**Students are expected to read the full CDC information on the following:**

1. Optimizing the supply of N95 respirators;
2. CMS recommendations on non-essential planned surgeries and procedures;
3. Diagnosing and treating patients with COVID-19; and
4. Who should be tested for COVID-19 and how to get them tested.

**Avoiding Exposure to COVID-19**

Medical students under their supervising physicians must use their best judgment to determine if a patient has signs and symptoms compatible with COVID-19 and whether the patient should be seen by the student as well as tested for the virus. Most patients with confirmed COVID-19 have developed fever and/or symptoms of acute respiratory illness (e.g., cough, difficulty breathing). When patients present with these symptoms they become a patient under investigation. **Students should avoid seeing patients with COVID-19, or who are under investigation for COVID-19, in order to preserve PPE and avoid becoming a vector.** This is because the patient with COVID-19 symptoms should be seen by the least number of medical providers in the office as possible, while still receiving care.

**VCOM students should be aware that state and local health departments may adapt recommended testing guidelines to respond to rapidly changing local circumstances and should read the most recent COVID-19 clinical criteria daily, if not every other day, which includes information on prioritizing testing and treatment.** While there are no current U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved drugs specifically for the treatment of patients with COVID-19, and no approved immunizations, research and investigation occurring may see some new treatment from
antivirals, antibodies, and or an approved immunization, so students, as well as faculty, must remain aware of the most current literature and should read every other day, if not daily, for changes. When a safe vaccine is developed, VCOM students will be required to obtain the vaccine.

Expectations for VCOM Student Professionalism during the COVID-19 Pandemic:

VCOM OMS-3 and 4 Self-Triage and Initial Actions to Protect the Health and Safety of Themselves and the Public (including but not limited to patients and other persons encountered in the outpatient and inpatient clinical learning setting, e.g., staff, preceptor, other learners, residents, and family members)

Scope: The following is a learning module that focuses upon preparing VCOM students, who are entering or re-entering the clinical setting, for learning in the context of COVID-19. The scope of this learning module is narrow, as it is limited to key knowledge and actions for VCOM OMS-3 and 4 learners to maximize their health and safety, as well as the health and safety of patients and others encountered in clinic and inpatient settings. This knowledge, and these initial actions during, are integral to osteopathic physician identity formation and professionalism as informed and affected by the evolving COVID-19 pandemic. This module does not provide clinical management guidance. Students are provided with additional learning modules for COVID 19 patient care.

Learning Objectives: Upon completion of this module, an OMS-3 or 4 learner will be able to--

1. Recognize key signs and symptoms of COVID-19;
2. Describe the initial protective actions to take should they begin to demonstrate symptoms similar to those associated with COVID-19; and
3. List initial administrative actions they are expected to take should she or he develop symptoms consistent with possible infection by COVID-19.

VCOM students requesting to delay their clinical rotations: VCOM seeks to balance the need for supporting the learning of its OMS-3 and 4 students in a clinical setting, whether outpatient or inpatient, against the evolving health risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Notwithstanding expectations and requirements to avoid infection, clinical training presents some risk of infection by COVID-19. By returning to rotations, just as utilizing other facilities for everyday activity, students assume the responsibility to be vigilant in their activities, hygiene, and social distancing, and assume the risk of possibly contracting the coronavirus despite the CDC-recommended precautions taken by the individual and by VCOM. These risks assumed by students include, but are not limited to, the possibility of personal illness, injury, lengthy hospitalization, requiring the use of a ventilator, permanent disability and possibly even death. These are not health risks the College is able to mitigate except by following the CDC and local guidelines to the best of their ability and by asking that all students be aware of and follow these same guidelines.

By the act of returning to rotations, each student acknowledges he or she has read the above policy and information, understands the same, assumes the risks described herein, and waives and releases any claim or right of action against VCOM, its board of directors, officers, faculty, staff and other personnel arising out of and/or in connection with COVID-19 or in the event any person contracts the coronavirus (COVID-19 ), whether a COVID-19 infection occurs before, during, or after participation in any VCOM program or activity.
Should a student not wish to be on clinical rotations, VCOM will not require them to return to clinical learning rotations at this time and there will be no adverse consequences from VCOM. However, students must be aware that such an interruption in their clinical program will likely delay their graduation date and may prevent them from entering the residency match with their current class.

**VCOM student responsibility to notify their core site and VCOM of illness:** VCOM OMS-3 and 4 students have a high professional responsibility to recognize in themselves COVID-19 symptoms at the earliest stages and quickly take personal actions to protect their health, as well as to protect the health of all those with whom they may have contact. This is physician professionalism at its most basic. The setting of the following is anywhere in the United States, it is not only for when a student is at a VCOM core rotation site, but applies to non-VCOM training sites and also when the student is at home or on vacation.

Although previously included in self-care the following is information for all healthcare providers and is adapted for application to VCOM medical students:

**What are the symptoms of infection from COVID-19?** There are multiple symptoms ranging from mild to severe. The symptoms currently associated with the initial presentation of *symptomatic* COVID-19 are listed below. Students must continue to recognize there are many people who are infected and *asymptomatic*. The following list is current as of May 22, 2020, ([https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html)):

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Dizziness with change of mental status
- Diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting

These symptoms are similar to other viral illnesses (ex., influenza). Notably, dyspnea and loss of taste or smell may be rather unique to COVID-19. In general, students should not report to their clinical rotation if they are ill. Students should continue to monitor the CDC website for additional information on signs and symptoms.

**What should a student do if she/he begins to have symptoms potentially compatible with COVID-19 infection?** Take actions to *rapidly triage* your symptoms, determine the recommended self-care actions to take, minimize infecting others, and notify key persons who have responsibilities for your well-being. This Johns Hopkins Medicine site is particularly succinct: [https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/coronavirus-what-if-i-feel-sick](https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/coronavirus-what-if-i-feel-sick). VCOM requests students take the following actions in this order:

1. Seek emergency medical care by calling 911 should a student have any of the following *emergency warning signs* (this is not a comprehensive list):
   a. Trouble breathing
b. Persistent pain or pressure in the chest  
c. New confusion  
d. Inability to wake or stay awake  
e. Bluish lips or face

2. Access the CDC “Self-Checker” on the following website page:  
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html. This tool  
will help the student assess their signs and symptoms as well as provide recommendations  
and public health contacts customized to their current location. The Self-Checker is not  
intended as being diagnostic, rather it serves more of a triage, recommendation, and  
referral function. VCOM requests students follow the guidance provided.

3. **Minimize transmission** by:  
a. Safely vacating clinical spaces  
b. Ensuring a minimum of 6 feet of social distancing  
c. Staying home (self-quarantine in lodging/housing):  
d. Ensuring proper wearing of at least a surgical or cloth mask until in a safe and isolated  
setting  
e. Further minimize spread of the COVID-19 virus through fomites:  
   i. Wear non-sterile gloves if in public  
   ii. Wipe surfaces touched and/or prevent others from touching the same surfaces  
   iii. Frequently wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and water or use at least 60%  
alcohol-based hand sanitizer  
   iv. Increase environmental sanitation (wiping surfaces contacted or touched with a  
virucidal cleaner if available; and don’t forget surfaces touched in the car).  
Remember that cleaners with strong alcohol concentrations or other cleaners  
followed by strong alcohol concentrations that are readily available may suffice  
as such a cleaner.

4. **Seek Timely Medical Evaluation and Care if COVID-19 symptoms develop:** This can occur  
through local public health agencies, student’s primary care physician, or clinical resources  
at the rotation site. This action will help objectively validate symptoms and signs as well as  
determine next steps, including diagnostic COVID-19 testing for infection. In most settings,  
a clinician or public health authority testing order will be required to obtain laboratory  
testing for COVID-19. Students must notify their clinical faculty preceptor and the Clinical  
Affairs office if they are positive for COVID-19 or if they become a person under  
investigation (PUI) for infection see below.

5. **Communicate!** VCOM OMS-3 and 4 students are required to inform the following should  
they have symptoms consistent with a person under investigation (PUI) for COVID-19  
(students may consider reviewing the PUI reporting form at  
should occur whether the student has laboratory confirmed COVID-19 illness or is in self-  
quarantine:  
a. Clinical Faculty Preceptor  
b. Clinical setting staff, e.g., outpatient clinic or hospital in which the OMS-3 or 4 student is  
rotating  
c. Site Coordinator
d. DSME (Director of Student Medical Education)
e. VCOM Clinical Affairs
   i. 3rd or 4th Year Director
   ii. Associate Dean pertinent to your year

Summary: VCOM expects OMS-3 and 4 students to model exceptional physician professional behavior to safeguard their health as well as the health of the public. This is accomplished through early recognition of symptoms and signs, and taking timely protective actions that include clinical assessment, minimization of transmission of COVID-19 to others, and reporting their situation to those who are responsible for their learning and well-being.

Strategies to Optimize the Supply of PPE and Equipment by Medical Students

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is used every day by healthcare personnel (HCP) to protect themselves, patients, and others when providing care. PPE helps protect HCP from potentially infectious patients and materials, toxic medications, and other potentially dangerous substances used in healthcare delivery. PPE shortages are currently posing a tremendous challenge to the U.S. healthcare system because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Healthcare facilities are having difficulty accessing the needed PPE and are having to identify alternate ways to provide patient care. If PPE is limited in the health care environment in which you are participating you must also prioritize measures to conserve PPE supplies along the continuum of care. The PPE equipment includes: Eye Protection, isolation gowns, gloves, face masks, N95 respirators, air purifying and elastomeric respirators, and ventilators. VCOM students will be provided with surgical masks, a reusable face shield, hand sanitizer, and gloves. As students will be avoiding care for COVID-19 patients or patients under investigation for COVID-19, these supplies should be adequate to supplement the ambulatory site experiences. Most hospital sites will require that a student utilize their PPE, however, where possible, students should utilize their own PPE. Students must become educated on the appropriate use of PPE (when supplies are and are not limited) and should not be a burden on the clinical environment as related to PPE. VCOM will be providing PPE for all third year students (surgical and/or cloth masks for ambulatory rotations and KN95 for hospital rotations) and will supply surgical masks for PPE and money to assist students who are purchasing some of the site specific PPE for fourth year students. Students must sign the waiver and return to the College to begin rotations. The waiver is required in many of the clinical sites as well and students may be required to sign a site specific waiver from time to time.

For the information provided above, VCOM credits the following resources: CDC website, NIH guidelines, recommendations by AACOM, AAMC, AMA, and the AOA, the US Department of Education, as well as other state and national organizations (too numerous to mention) who have been essential in providing guidance and information in the continual updating of COVID 19 requirements and restrictions.
Section 4

VCOM Facilities Plan for Repopulation of the Campus
SECTION 4: VCOM FACILITIES PLAN FOR REPOPULATION OF THE CAMPUS

The Vice President for Facilities serves on the College-wide COVID-19 team and each campus team. The Director of Facilities on each VCOM Campus serves on the campus-specific COVID-19 team. The following plans have been put in place and will be the policies for practice throughout the COVID-19 restrictions while in Phase 2 and will be re-evaluated for any modifications if the campus moves back to Phase 1 or moves to Phase 3.

1. Signage will be placed throughout the campus buildings on ways to stay safe, including but not limited to: hand-washing, hand-sanitizer, staying home if ill, physical distancing, face masks, and banning congregation.
2. All faculty, staff, and students have been sent information on the above procedures for staying safe. All faculty, staff, and students will be screened prior to returning to campus and educated on COVID-19.
3. To ensure physical distancing and keeping less than 50 persons in any one room (as recommended by the CDC and all states), VCOM has remodeled event facilities for classrooms, removed excess chairs, ensured technology is in place, and altered student schedules.
4. Visitors have been limited to essential visitors for business purposes only. All administrators are aware and employees are required to consult with supervisors before inviting visitors to campus.
5. All faculty, staff, and students have been advised to stay at home if ill.
6. A small amount of “grab and go” food services are provided through healthy vending and self-check-out kiosks; however, students have been advised to bring their own food from home if needed.
7. In the classrooms, physical distancing of 6 to 7 feet will be required for students and the speaker.
8. All classrooms are limited to 50 per room, including the speaker.
9. Laboratory attendance also is restricted to 50 per room. The exception to physical distancing will occur during OMM laboratories when two students are assigned as partners for physical examination and osteopathic manipulation education. The two people are; however, distanced from the next group by 6 feet or more.
10. Hand sanitizing stations are placed at each entrance, elevators, classroom entrances, and other common areas throughout the building.
11. Students will be allowed to use the external exits from the ground floor classrooms to outdoor patios for break time where they can socially distance rather than exiting into the hallways to prevent congregating. In general, the majority of the time, only half of the first and second-year medical students will be on campus at the same time.
12. Congregating in the hallways is not allowed.
13. Capacity of restrooms is limited to the number of people in the stalls and two persons waiting to appropriately self-distance.
14. VCOM has increased the number of cleaning staff and cleaning protocols.
15. The times students are allowed to study within the building is limited to between 5 p.m. and 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday; Friday and Saturday between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m.; and Sunday between 12 noon and 10 p.m. Physical distancing protocols will still apply.

16. Each small group study room will be posted as to maximum occupancy and physical distancing restrictions. These restrictions will also apply in the library.

17. Students will not be allowed to study in lecture hall space as those will be in process of being cleaned nightly.

18. Students wishing to study on campus must sign-in documenting where he or she will be studying. There will be limited areas for study and these will be available on a first come, first serve basis.

In general, medical students are adult learners who will be asked to study at home if at all possible.

19. Prevention education has been provided to all students, faculty, and staff that follows the CDC guidelines.

20. All areas for work have been evaluated for workspace physical distancing. Employees who are in offices are asked to keep their office doors closed (or nearly closed) and are required to wear a mask when exiting their office.

21. Many employees are going to have days they work from home and days they work on campus, which helps to limit the number of people in the building.

22. All employees considered at high-risk will be working from home.

23. Conference rooms will be limited to the number that can appropriately self-distance. In general, the maximum number in the largest conference room is eight. All others will join by ZOOM.

24. Cleaning:
   a. Classrooms – all surfaces will be cleaned with a germicidal disinfectant that contains a minimum of 75% alcohol and/or known chemical that kills COVID-19.
   b. Classrooms will be wiped at noon and cleaned each evening.
   c. All door handles, stair-rails, and other frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned each evening.
   d. All faculty and staff are provided with a cannister of wipes to clean their desks and in office surfaces each evening and between visitors (other faculty, staff, and students) in their office.
   e. If a student, faculty, or staff member tests positive for COVID-19 and they have been coming to campus, the area they occupied will be thoroughly disinfected and be vacated for an appropriate period.

25. VCOM students have independent housing and this is not owned by the College. Students, faculty and staff have been educated on prevention of COVID-19.

26. Third-year and fourth-year medical students who are in clinical training will only come to campus one at a time for meetings or individual education and these will be rare and limited to those which are required to be in person.

27. VCOM students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to use outdoor space for breaks, lunches or study, and these areas will be wiped with disinfectant a minimum of three (3) times daily. Faculty and staff will be responsible for wiping the patio tables with their own wipes that have been provided by the College.
28. As referenced in other documents, all employees and students have been provided with three washable face masks and hand sanitizer. Each night, all persons are advised to spray or dip face masks in alcohol and let dry or to launder.
Section 5

Information Technology Plan
Section 5: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PLAN

History: In March of 2020, VCOM increased the number of licenses for ZOOM, making this technology available to all employees and students for meetings and educational sessions. VCOM has always used a technology referred to as VCOM TV where all lectures, presentations, and some laboratory demonstrations were recorded and placed in a restricted site for the VCOM community. Using this technology allowed VCOM to adapt to offering virtual education to all students with minimal educational disruption. Faculty and staff who used desktops were provided with laptops so they could continue their work from home.

Instructions for the use of ZOOM technology and other online meetings

1. All faculty and staff are required to use ZOOM technology for larger meetings where physical distancing may be challenging.
2. All faculty and staff are encouraged to use ZOOM technology when possible for smaller meetings, as this reduces person-to-person exposure.
3. More restrictive technology will be used for meetings such as professionalism and ethics boards and promotion boards.
4. Faculty and staff have been trained on the use of ZOOM technology, so meetings can occur with ease of use.

Information Technology Support for the Department of Medical Education, for Simulation, and for Faculty Support

5. All faculty are required to prepare the curriculum to be delivered in-person and also to be delivered virtually for asynchronous learning and/or in case of an unexpected closure of the campus. All faculty will be provided with the appropriate IT support and should notify the Associate Dean for Medical Education, or Jim Rathmann, or Kevin Price if having technical difficulty with on-line presentations or other IT needs. VCOM is utilizing Voice over PowerPoint on CANVAS for most of this delivery, however the Simulation Center is utilizing newer technologies that may require additional support.
6. All meetings by clinical affairs with hospitals and clinical faculty are now to be done by ZOOM or other virtual means until further notice. Associate Dean and DSME meetings are to occur monthly, and will be supported by IT.
7. Simulated standardized patient visits continue using a virtual technology application and placed on CANVAS. The Simulation Center and IT are working closely on this delivery on each campus.
8. Testing will continue to occur via Exam Soft, which can be utilized by students on campus and off-campus should the campus be unexpectedly closed or exams rescheduled.
9. New students will be set up with individual appointments with IT to install the required educational software. Email addresses are provided by virtual means. Appointments for ID badges will be set individually within the first two weeks after return but before needed on campus.

The students will be provided with the appropriate information during orientation. Students, faculty, and staff will continue to use the help-desk for assistance.
Section 6

Employee and Student Guidance on:
COVID Testing Requirements
for Students and Employees

and

An Action Plan for Students and Employees Who Become Ill
on Campus or Who Test Positive
after Returning to Campus
EDWARD VIA COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

SECTION 6: Employee and Student Guidance on

- COVID Screening and Testing
- Requirements for Returning to Campus
- An Action Plan for Student and Employees Who Become Ill on Campus; and
- An Action Plan for Students and Employees Who Test Positive After Returning to Campus

Your COVID-19 Officer: The COVID-19 officers are the:

- Associate Dean for Student Affairs for 1st and 2nd year students,
- Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs for 3rd and 4th year students, and the
- Director of Human Resources (for employees).

Each of these COVID-19 Officers will assist you with the contact with a healthcare provider and for testing, as well as to connect you with the local health department.

COVID-19 Screening and Testing on Returning to Campus: Following the guidance by the CDC, all students and employees who return to campus will not be tested for COVID-19 prior to returning. This guidance for not testing all students is also given by many of the local health departments of our states. (However, if local health departments require testing in the future, VCOM may change this policy to follow the guidance of their local health departments.)

Screening: All persons coming to campus will be screened with a questionnaire to deem if they are at risk for having COVID-19. The questionnaire (screening tool) will be provided on-line and all students and employees who develop a positive response on the tool will have further testing. The questionnaire will include temperature checks. Persons who are deemed to be at increased risk for having the COVID-19 virus will be required to have further COVID-19 testing.

Guidelines for Returning to Campus: VCOM requests all Student and Employees follow the guidance below on returning to the VCOM campus. This guidance serves as a policy so not to place others on campus (students and employees) at risk for contracting COVID-19.

1. If you are ill, stay at home. The exceptions would be an appointment with your physician or to follow recommendations provided by the local health department in being tested or receiving treatment. Call for emergency help if you become seriously ill.

2. Be educated on the facts. All employees and students are required to read the educational materials on the CDC website. These same facts and guiding principles were sent in the Spring and again in July. The guidance also contains instructions and waiver form which is being provided to all students and employees on Qualtrix.

3. Participate in Screening Protocols so as not to infect others. All students and employees will be required to complete a screening survey tool prior to returning to campus. The survey tool will assure all who have had recent exposure or illness report and be provided with additional testing to rule out COVID-19.

4. Students and Employees deemed to be at risk for having COVID-19 from the survey tool or screening. All students and employees who are recommended by the survey tool to be at risk
for having COVID-19 will be required to have further testing and evaluation before returning to campus and a period of self-quarantine may be required before returning to campus.

5. VCOM may also ask various employees and students to volunteer for random testing from time to time in cooperation with the Departments of Health.

6. **Two types of testing exist:** a) a viral test to show if you have current or active infection and b) an antibody test to show if you had a previous infection.

7. VCOM will follow the state and local health department guidance on testing of persons who demonstrate illness and may be required to perform random screening on campus from time to time.

8. If you test positive, you will be asked to follow the advice of the local health department, as well as to read and follow the **CDC's guidelines on protecting yourself and others when you test positive for COVID-19.** You will also be required to follow the policy and procedures below.

**Policy for Persons Who Develop Symptoms of COVID-19 While on Campus**

1. Notify the COVID-19 officer on campus
2. The COVID-19 officer will assist you with obtaining a test for COVID-19 and to notify your local healthcare provider (by telemedicine or in person).
3. The COVID-19 officer will also assist you in notifying the local health department.
4. The COVID-19 officers are
   - the Associate Dean for Student Affairs (for 1st and 2nd year students),
   - the Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs (for 3rd and 4th year students), and
   - the Director of Human Resources (for employees).
5. Each of these COVID-19 officers will assist you with the contact with a provider and if testing with the local health department.
6. While waiting on campus for disposition and transportation, you will be isolated in a room which has been established to protect you and others at VCOM from spreading the virus.
7. If you test negative, you were probably not infected at the time of the test, however until you have the results of the test you must act in a manner as though the test is positive and self-quarantine.

9. Recognize a **negative test** for infection means you do not have COVID-19 currently. The test does not tell if you have ever been exposed to COVID-19 or if you have immunity from prior infection. Immunity is only known when you receive an antibody test and is not a result of the antigen test which is used most often to test for acute infection. So, you may test antigen negative and antibody positive if you had COVID-19 earlier and did not know it. Some individuals have tested positive for antibodies and/or acute disease who had no symptoms. It is important to know these principles in case you have a positive antibody test later when participating in contact tracing or other antibody testing.

10. If you test positive for COVID-19, and/or if you become ill at home and are waiting to be seen or to test, you should take all preventive measures to protect yourself and others. These are found on the CDC website under **What to Do If You Are Sick With COVID-19** and include
1. **Stay home.** Most people with COVID-19 have mild illness and can recover at home without hospital care. Do not leave your home or visit public areas, except to get medical care.
2. **Take care of yourself.** Get rest and stay hydrated. Take over-the-counter medicines, such as acetaminophen, to help you feel better.
3. **Stay in touch with your doctor.** Call before you get medical care. Be sure to get care if you have trouble breathing, or have any emergency warning signs.
4. **Avoid leaving your home except for healthcare purposes.**
5. **Avoid public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.**
6. **Separate yourself from other people** within your home, **stay in a specific room in your home** away from other people and pets and do not share a bathroom if possible.
7. **Assure others in your home wear face masks, practice handwashing and use hand sanitizer, use gloves** if possible, and **socially distance** a minimum of 6 feet or more from you when they bring something to your room.
8. **Eat on paper plates and use disposable utensils** if ill. Dispose of your items in a closed trash bag in your room that can be more safely carried to an outside trash area daily.
9. **Use tissues** to cover your mouth and dispose in a trash bag that’s removed nightly.
10. **Wash your hands frequently** with soap and water for 20 seconds followed by hand sanitizer. (This is important to do often and each time after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; and before eating or preparing food).
11. **Avoid touching** your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
12. **Avoid** sharing personal household items including but not limited to dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people in your home.
13. **Wash any items touched thoroughly** with soap and water or put in the dishwasher.
14. **Clean and disinfect** high-touch surfaces in your “sick room” and bathroom; wear disposable gloves. Let someone else clean and disinfect surfaces in common areas, but you should clean your bedroom and bathroom, if possible.
15. **If a caregiver or other person needs to clean and disinfect** a sick person’s bedroom or bathroom, they should do so only on an as-needed basis. The caregiver/other person should wear a mask and disposable gloves prior to cleaning.
16. **Clean all** high-touch surfaces include phones, remote controls, counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables with soapy water and then disinfectant. Be careful of electronics and water.
17. **If showing any of these signs, seek emergency medical care immediately:**
   i. Trouble breathing and/or Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
   ii. New confusion or Inability to wake or stay awake
   iii. Severe fatigue and shortness of breath when walking
   iv. Bluish lips or face

11. **There is no specific antiviral treatment** recommended for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 should often receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms and for severe cases, treatment should include support vital organ functions.
12. **Vaccine Trials:** Some individuals are participating in vaccine trials. Participation in a vaccine trial is not prohibited and has no bearing on your ability to come to campus.
Section 7

The COVID-19 Committees
and
Campus Response Teams
Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM)

SECTION 7: VCOM COVID-19 Coordinators and Campus Response Teams

COVID-19 College-Wide Contacts for Questions Regarding the Plan

- Contact and Email Address for questions from employees: Robert Hudson, Senior Director for Human Resources. rhudson@vcom.vt.edu

- Contact for State and National Accrediting Bodies and Departments of Health
  Debbie West EdD, Vice Provost, Institutional Planning and Accreditation, dwest@vt.vcom.edu
  Secondary contact: Dixie Tooke-Rawlins, DO President and Provost dtrawlins@vt.vcom.edu

Lead contact for Students regarding Questions on this plan:

Virginia 1st and 2nd year Students: Whitney Stokes, Associate Dean for Student Affairs
  wstokes@vt.vcom.edu

Virginia 2nd and 3rd year Students: Sofia Abraham, DO, Associate Dean Clinical Affairs
  sabraham@vt.vcom.edu

Auburn 1st and 2nd year Students: Jake Williamson Ph.D., Associate Dean Student Affairs
  jwilliamson@auburn.vcom.edu

Auburn 2nd and 3rd year Students: Tom Dayberry, DO, Associate Dean Clinical Affairs
  tdayberry@auburn.vcom.edu

Carolinas 1st and 2nd year Students: Lindsey Ridgeway Ph.D. Associate Dean Student Affairs
  lridgeway@carolinas.vcom.edu

Carolinas 3rd and 4th year Students: Lindsey Tjiattas-Saleski, DO Associate Dean Clinical
  ltjiattassaleski@carolinas.vcom.edu

Louisiana 1st year Students: Nathan Kinnard, Associate Dean for Student Affairs
  nkinnard@ulm.vcom.edu

Lead Contacts for Employees for COVID-19 Questions - Campus Specific

Employees: Robert Hudson, Senior Director for Human Resources and/or the Director of Human Resources on your campus.
I. VCOM COLLEGE-WIDE COVID-19 COMMITTEE APPOINTED MEMBERS AND CHARGES:

Chair: Robert Hudson, Senior Director for Human Resources and COVID-19 College-wide Officer
Co-Chair: Dixie Tooke-Rawlins, DO, President and Provost
Vice Provost Institutional Planning, Accreditation & Student Support: Debbie West, EdD
The Senior Vice President (over Clinical Services and GME): John Lucas, DO
The Campus Deans from each Campus:
   Jan Willcox, DO, Virginia
   Elizabeth Palmarozzi, DO, Auburn
   Matthew Cannon, DO, Carolinas
   Ray Morrison, DO, Louisiana
The Vice President for Finance and CFO: Chuck Swaha
The Vice President for Communications, Marketing, Website and Publications: Cindy Rawlins
The Vice President for Administrative Policy and Law: Honorable Randy Schuller
The Senior Vice President for Facilities and IT: Bill Price

COVID-19 COLLEGE-WIDE COMMITTEE PURPOSE AND PROCEDURES

The Committee will be convened monthly and more frequently as needed.
The Committee will focus on policies and procedures and will follow the status of all Campuses and their response to COVID-19.
This Committee will review national trends including the impact from national decisions made by ACOM, COCA, the CDC, or the Federal Government. The Committee will propose actions and changes by College Administration to VCOM policies and procedures as needed to adapt to COVID-19, and to the COVID-19 plan. Minutes will be taken by the Executive Assistant to the Senior Director for Human Resources.
The impact of any changes to the overall College will also be reviewed and must be approved by the President and the Vice President for Administrative Policy and Law.

II. VCOM CAMPUS-SPECIFIC COVID-19 COMMITTEE APPOINTED MEMBERS AND CHARGES:

COVID-19 CAMPUS SPECIFIC COMMITTEES AND THEIR PURPOSE AND PROCEDURES

A Campus-Specific Committee will be created for each campus.
The Committee will be convened at a minimum monthly and may meet more frequently as needed and determined by the Dean or the President.
The Committee will focus on the status of the specific campus and their responses to COVID-19 and the application of the policies and procedures on the Campus.
The Committee will focus on and be responsive to the evolving Community and State events surrounding COVID-19 and suggestions for any needed changes to Policies and Procedures or how they are applied to the specific Campus according to their needs.
Minutes will be taken by the Director for Human Resources for the Campus.
The impact to the specific Campus will be reviewed and suggestions for changes to policies and procedures may be referred to the College-wide Committee for consideration.
(Urgent changes may be sent to the College-Wide Committee Chairs and the President).
The Committee may also meet to review considerations for vulnerable students or employees when those issues cannot be resolved by the Campus Dean in consultation with the President and Provost and the Vice Provost. The consideration is only required when the issue cannot be addressed by the Officer to meet the needs of the employee or student following College Policy. When the Committee meets on an employee or student issue that cannot be resolved by the Campus Dean or appropriate Officer, Associate Dean the name of the employee or student involved will not be used and a number will be applied to the case in order to ensure confidentiality. In most cases accommodations can be made by the Campus Dean and/or the Division Officer who is the supervisor of the individual and this can be a report to the Committee rather than a decision to be made.

**Virginia Campus COVID-19 Committee:**

**Chair:** Robert Hudson, Senior Director for Human Resources and COVID-19 College-wide Officer  
Dixie Tooke-Rawlins, DO, President of the College  
Bill Price, Vice President for facilities and Information Technology  
Randy Schuller, Vice President for Administrative Policy and Law  
Cindy Rawlins, Vice President for Communications, Marketing, Website and Publications  
Debbie West, Vice Provost for Institutional Planning, Accreditation, and Student Support  
John Lucas, DO, Senior Vice President for Health Services and GME  
Jan Willcox, DO, The Campus Dean  
Whitney Stokes, Associate Dean for Student Services  
Sofia Abraham, DO, Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs  
Calvin Price, Director of Facilities  
Chuck Swaha, Vice President for Finance and CFO  
Renee Prater, Associate Dean for the first-year and second-year students.  
Brian Hill, Dean for the MABS program  
Peter Recupero, DO  
Noelle Bissell, MD, Director for the Mo. Regional Health Department  
Students to be determined when classes resume  
Recorder: Assistant Director for Human Resources Virginia Campus

**Carolinias Campus Committee**

**Chair:** Robert Hudson, Senior Director for Human Resources and COVID-19 College-wide Officer  
Jean Harris, Director of Human Resources and COVID-19 Officer for the Campus  
Dixie Tooke-Rawlins, DO, President of the College  
Bill Price, Vice President for facilities and Information Technology  
Randy Schuller, Vice President for Administrative Policy and Law  
Cindy Rawlins, Vice President for Communications, Marketing, Website and Publications  
Debbie West, Vice Provost for Institutional Planning, Accreditation, and Student Support  
John Lucas, DO, Senior Vice President for Health Services and GME  
Matt Cannon, DO, The Campus Dean  
Lindsey Ridgeway, Associate Dean for Student Services  
Linda Tajekas-Saleski, DO, Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs  
Monk Monahan, Director of Facilities
Chuck Swaha, Vice President for Finance and CFO
Ron Januchowski, Associate Dean for the first-year and second-year students.
Students to be determined when classes resume

Auburn Campus Committee

Chair: Robert Hudson, Senior Director for Human Resources and COVID-19 College-wide Officer
Dixie Took-Rawlins, DO, President of the College
Bill Price, Vice President for facilities and Information Technology
Randy Schuller, Vice President for Administrative Policy and Law
Cindy Rawlins, Vice President for Communications, Marketing, Website and Publications
Debbie West, Vice Provost for Institutional Planning, Accreditation, and Student Support
John Lucas, DO, Senior Vice President for Health Services and GME
Elizabeth Palmarozzi, DO, The Campus Dean
Jake Williamson, the Associate Dean for Student Services
Randy Cervoski, Director of Facilities
Chuck Swaha, Vice President for Finance and CFO
Rich Virgilio, DO, Associate Dean for the first-year and second-year students.
Robert Pepper, DO, Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs
Tom Dayberry, DO, Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs
Karla Meadows, Director of Human Resources Auburn and COVID-19 contact for employees.
Students to be determined when classes resume

Louisiana Campus Committee

Chair: Robert Hudson, Senior Director for Human Resources and COVID-19 College-wide Officer
Christie Ellis, Director of Human Resources and COVID-19 Officer for La. employees
Dixie Took-Rawlins, DO, President of the College
Bill Price, Vice President for facilities and Information Technology
Randy Schuller, Vice President for Administrative Policy and Law
Cindy Rawlins, Vice President for Communications, Marketing, Website and Publications
Debbie West, Vice Provost for Institutional Planning, Accreditation, and Student Support
John Lucas, DO, Senior Vice President for Health Services and GME
Ray Morrison, DO, The Campus Dean
Nathan Kinnard, the Associate Dean for Student Services and primary COVID-19 contact for first-year and second-year students.
Donald Langley, DO, Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs and primary COVID-19 contact for third-year and fourth-year students.
Darrell Dozier, Director of Facilities
Chuck Swaha, Vice President for Finance and CFO
Mark Sanders, DO, Associate Dean for the first-year and second-year students.
Students to be determined when classes begin.
**Emergent Actions and Contact Information:**
The Committee or the President, Campus Dean, 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 depending upon whether it is the employee or student infected. The Vice Provost or the Senior Vice President will notify the local Director of the Health Department / District or their COVID-19 contact with any new cases. The Directors of the local Health Departments where any of the VCOM Campuses are located, will be invited to be a member of the Campus Committee and will receive a copy of this plan as well as updates monthly. The local Health Departments will be asked to perform contact tracing where the departments provide this. Where this is not provided, VCOM will utilize a new application tool that has been developed for such tracing. Confidentiality is maintained for all tracing.

**Health Department Contacts**
The Director of Human Resources and/or the Vice Provost, in consultation with the Campus Dean and the President, will inform the Health Department of any case(s). The contact information for the Health Departments include:

**For the Virginia Campus:**
New River Health District
Virginia Department of Health
210 Pepper St. SE, Suite A
Christiansburg, VA 24073
Ph. (540) 585-3304

In addition, in Virginia, the local NRV Health Department Director, Noelle Bissell, MD serves on the VCOM-Virginia Campus Covid-19 Committee.
Section 8

Plans for a Response to a COVID-19 Case and a COVID-19 Outbreak on Campus
EDWARD VIA COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

SECTION 8: PLANS FOR A RESPONSE TO COVID-19 CASE AND A COVID-19 OUTBREAK ON CAMPUS

This document will be used as the quick reference on VCOM’s response to a COVID-19 suspicious case, positive case, or multiple cases as an outbreak on campus to mitigate the spread on campus. This plan follows the Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) Decision Tree provided through the CDC. It should be noted; however, that VCOM will work closely with the local health department on confirmed cases who may have recommendations or requirements beyond what is written below and when such requirements are made, VCOM will follow all requirements set forth by the local health department.

A. WHEN SOMEONE BECOMES ILL WHO IS ON CAMPUS

All employees and students have been informed NOT to come to campus if he or she is ill. However, if someone becomes ill after arriving on campus they must contact the COVID-19 Officer on Campus. The COVID-19 Officer will place the person in an isolated room (a room has been arranged for this purpose and will remain open throughout the COVID-19 restrictions).

1. An appropriate assessment of risk will occur to include:
   • Is this someone who became ill on campus or soon after leaving campus and does not have COVID-19 symptoms?
   • Is this someone who has COVID 19 symptoms and no diagnosis has been made?

2. If the employee or student has COVID-19 symptoms, the COVID-19 Officer will contact the Campus Dean and President and arrangements will be made for the employee or student to be seen by a physician and to have testing. Same day testing will be required and so the positive or negative test information will return quickly. The student will see the designated student health clinic or a separate physician if they have a local primary care provider outside of student health. The employee will be seen by their local health provider. In either case, the College has ensured a provider will provide this assistance should the student or employee not have a provider.
   a. If a student or employee tests positive for COVID-19, that person may not return to campus until cleared by the COVID-19 Officer and Committee (working with the local health department). The CIFSS Division will work with the student to ensure that he or she is supported academically and for psychological effects.
   b. If a student or employee tests negative for COVID-19, they will be treated as all other who present with illnesses other than COVID-19 according to the faculty and staff handbooks and students according to the student handbook. If the test is negative for COVID-19 and the person is no longer ill, they will be allowed to return to campus when all symptoms have resolved.

3. In the case of the ill employee who is not experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, the Officer will follow up on the student’s or employee’s progress to ensure the person does not develop COVID-19 symptoms and will ask them to test if any COVID-19 symptoms occur. The Officer will also ensure the person is well and symptom-free before returning to campus.

4. The COVID-19 Officer will have the employee or student perform appropriate tracking of the past seven days for exposures prior to becoming ill and since becoming ill and will maintain this tracking for the department of health. The COVID-19 Officer will also notify all close contacts that they have had possible exposure to COVID-19 and to self-
quarantine, monitor for symptoms for a period of ten days, and to practice social distancing and preventive measures within their home. The name of the employee or student infected will remain confidential.

5. The COVID-19 Officers, the Campus Dean, the Vice Provost, the Vice President, the President and Provost and the rest of the COVID-19 Campus Committee will meet when there is a positive case on campus. The appropriate COVID-19 Officer for the student or faculty member and the Campus Dean will also serve as the individual(s) responsible to assist the employee or student to notify the local Health Department that the person has tested positive for COVID-19, to share known contacts, and to develop a plan for safe disposition, as well as a plan for the campus. The report will also go to the Committee to plan the course of action for the campus.
   a. At a minimum, VCOM will inform any close contacts (less than 6 feet and or using same area – suite, desks, doors, etc.) of the possibility of being exposed to a person (remains not named) with COVID-19 and ask they follow precautionary procedures not to spread infection until testing occurs.
   b. If the student or employee tests positive, the campus area impacted will be notified there has been a positive case on campus and to use additional precautions. (VCOM will not reveal the name of the person infected during this process).
   c. While awaiting the test results, the area where the employee or student occupied will be taped off until a thorough cleaning/disinfecting occurs prior to anyone working in the area again. (The facilities team will be trained for such cleaning.) See the Facilities document for further information on cleaning.
   d. The case will be considered positive and all precautions taken until a negative test result is received OR until a positive diagnosis is confirmed.
   e. VCOM will follow all other advice provided by the Department of Health.

6. Enhanced monitoring will occur on campus when there has been a reported COVID-19 case to see if others develop such symptoms. Enhanced monitoring will be followed to ensure there is no increase in absenteeism of employees or students and if this is noted the health department will be consulted prior to further action.

7. Any small group gatherings or small events will be canceled. (Large groups are not allowed at this time but this applies to smaller group gatherings).

8. When someone on campus tests positive, VCOM administration and the COVID-19 Committee will, with consideration of the advice of the local Health Department, determine the appropriate plan of action:
   a. VCOM will coordinate with local health officials from the Department of Health on responding to campus outbreaks or when there is a significant surge of cases in the community, and determining any closure of portions or of the entire campus. The COVID-19 Officer, the Dean of the Campus, and the President are designated by VCOM as the liaisons to work with the local health department.

9. Any decision on closing the campus and on the return to campus will be made by VCOM administration in consultation with the local Health Department and in cooperation with the College’s accrediting body, if an extended closure.
10. **All classes and events will be canceled if a significant outbreak on campus** occurs as determined by the COVID-19 Committee and when needed advice of the local Health Department.

11. **VCOM will follow the state and local health department advice on closure** when there is a significant surge of cases in the community, local and state actions may close the campuses.

12. **VCOM administration in consultation with the Committee and the Health Department** may determine if a short-term closure is required for additional cleaning of campus buildings. This will be determined by whether the case is isolated or appears to be from contact with another student or employee on campus.

13. **VCOM administration in consultation with the Committee and the local Health Department** will determine when a longer-term closure of facilities may be required (up to 10 days). The classes may be limited to distinctive buildings that have not been used by the individual(s) diagnosed with COVID-19 or to online classes for a short period of time.

14. A short-term class suspension may be required for VCOM and the local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation to determine appropriate next steps for cleaning and disinfecting, for observing faculty and staff, and/or if longer-term closure is sufficient. VCOM will also follow the advice of the CDC and VDH in considering whether a move to online curriculum would be needed for the remainder of a semester.

15. During a time of a reported positive case, there will be heightened monitoring. The monitoring will include close observation of students and employees reports of illness, absenteeism from tests and required on campus events, and other measures employed as possible including contact tracing by the health department to ensure there is not an extended spread. Students and employees will be told to notify the COVID-19 Officer if they develop any symptoms. Testing will be supported.

16. During the short-term temporary suspension of classes, VCOM will continue to discourage students, staff, and faculty from gathering or socializing anywhere. This includes group childcare arrangements, as well as gathering at places like a friend’s house, a favorite restaurant, or the local coffee shop. Students, faculty, and staff are to continue social distancing even when not coming to campus.

**B. COMMUNICATION**

The President, the Campus Dean, COVID-19 Campus Committee, and the VP for Communications and Marketing will determine the best process to communicate the information regarding the news of possible exposure and any news to dismiss classes. This will be done in a manner in coordination with the local health department officials.

1. VCOM will ensure the plan includes messages to counter potential stigma and discriminations.

2. In a circumstance where there is a confirmed COVID-19 case that has been on campus, VCOM recognizes and will ensure confidentiality of the student or staff member is maintained as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, (as applicable and as possible with only supervisors knowing the absence is excused and with health department required notifications).

3. Appropriate protective gear will be worn by those cleaning. The area will be cleaned and disinfected and closed off from other students and employees until it is safe to occupy again. See the Facilities Plan for cleaning and disinfecting the area.
Section 9

VCOM’s Provisions for Academic Assistance to Students While Operating under COVID-19 Restrictions
EDWARD VIA COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

SECTION 9: VCOM’S Provisions for Academic Assistance to Students While Opening and Operating Under COVID-19 Restrictions

VCOM’s Center for Institutional, Faculty, and Student Success (CIFSS) on each campus provides academic assistance to VCOM students in a variety of ways. The following guidelines have been put in place to assure the provision of all forms of academic assistance during a restricted campus opening, during future campus closures, or should a student become ill and be quarantined off-campus due to COVID-19.

Academic Assistance
The Center provides nearly 1000 academic assistance meetings to OMS-1 through OMS-4 students each academic year. While most of these meetings occur in-person on campus, the Center does currently utilize other forms of technology for meetings with OMS-3 and OMS-4 students or with OMS-1 and OMS-2 students after hours and these methods will continue to be utilized.

VCOM recognizes the increased stress placed on students during this time and will continue to support students using on-line support wherever possible.

While the campus is open, students may continue to schedule individual in-person appointments with the Directors for Student and Institutional Academic Success. However, students may also schedule a Zoom or phone meeting. Zoom and/or phone meetings are encouraged while the campuses are under restriction. Directors may not meet with groups of students in-person; instead, these meetings must occur via Zoom.

All appointments with the Directors, except in emergencies, must be made in advance using the Bookings link provided to the students. When scheduling, students will be prompted to specify their choice of setting (in-person, Zoom, or phone).

Should Directors meet with students in-person:

- Students and the Director must wear face masks;
- Students and the Director must socially distance; and
- Directors must disinfect any areas the student may have touched in their office (arms of chair, desk, doorknob) immediately following the meeting.

Students should arrive on time for their appointment and should avoid arriving early as waiting areas will not be available for student use.

Peer Tutoring
Peer tutoring sessions are held for OMS-1 and OMS-2 students prior to every examination. Typically offered in-person for an unlimited number of students, sessions will now be offered via Zoom to minimize student gatherings. The dates and times for peer tutoring sessions will be posted on CANVAS and on the block calendars.

Academic Advising
OMS-1 and OMS-2 students are assigned biomedical and clinical faculty academic advisors. Students may still meet with their academic advisors; however, Zoom meetings are encouraged whenever
possible. If an in-person meeting is required, students may schedule an in-person meeting with their academic advisors in advance. Advisors may only meet with one student at a time. Advisors may not meet with groups of students in-person but can meet with groups via Zoom. Should advisors meet with students in-person:

- Students and advisors must wear face masks;
- Students and advisors must socially distance; and
- Advisors must disinfect any areas the student may have touched in their office (arms of chair, desk, doorknob) immediately following the meeting.
Section 10

Coping with COVID-19: Strategies for VCOM Students
Coping with COVID-19: Strategies for VCOM Students

Mental Health Resources

A pandemic can cause high levels of stress, which will affect each student in different ways. Fear and anxiety can cause strong emotions that may exacerbate a pre-existing mental health condition and/or initiate new symptoms. It is important that students take care of their mental health and have awareness of any red flags that indicate a need for help.

For emergency or non-emergency, confidential personal counseling, students have both on-campus and off-campus counseling options that are of no cost.

On-Campus Counseling
- VCOM employs a Mental Health Counselor on each campus and students are free to utilize the support of any of the four counselors regardless of which campus they attend.
  - Students may schedule non-emergency appointments through the Bookings link that has been previously provided to them and is also located in Canvas. Appointments are offered in person, by phone, or via Zoom (video conference).
  - Students can also contact any of the Directors of Counseling Services by email or phone.
    - Carolinas Campus: Natalie M. Fadel, PsyD nfadel@carolinas.vcom.edu 864-327-9875
    - Virginia Campus: Edward Magalhaes, PhD, LPC emagalhaes@vt.vcom.edu 540-231-1944
    - Auburn Campus: Mary A. Taylor, PhD, MS mtaylor@auburn.vcom.edu 334.442.4037
    - Louisiana Campus: David Boyle, PhD, LPC dboyle@ulm.vcom.edu 318.342.7100

Off-Campus Counseling
- In addition to VCOM’s Mental Health Counselors, VCOM contracts with mental health providers in the campus community to assure that VCOM students have readily accessible mental health services when preferred by the student. Local mental health services are free of charge and are available to students on each campus as well as immediate family members. In-person and telehealth options are available.
  - Carolina Campus: Spartanburg Area Mental Health Center (SAMHC) www.sparmhc.org 864-585-0366. 24-hour emergency care line: 864-585-0366 or 1-800-277-1366
  - Virginia Campus: New River Valley Community Services (NRVCS) www.nrvsc.org 540-961-8300. 24-hour emergency care line: 540-961-8400

WellConnect: For third and fourth year students, VCOM also contracts with WellConnect, a national mental health service that will facilitate in person counseling, phone sessions, or online sessions from any location. 24/7 emergency and non-emergency confidential line: 866-640-4777 or visit WellConnectForYou.com School code: VCOM.
- **BetterHelp**: A national virtual counseling service available to all students who have United health insurance through VCOM. Video, phone, and text options are available for counseling. Students may set up a free appointment at: [www.betterhelp.com/united/](http://www.betterhelp.com/united/).

**A variety of other resources are available to students in crisis:**
- Students who feel they are experiencing an emergency should call 911.
- Disaster Distress Helpline: 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746. [https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline](https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline) Provides immediate crisis counseling to people affected by natural or human caused disasters.
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org), or Lifeline Crisis Chat to connect with a counselor via web chat. [https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat/](https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat/)
- Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741 if you are in a crisis. Provides 24/7 mental health support via text message. [www.crisistextline.org](http://www.crisistextline.org)

The CDC and the Department of Mental Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health provide tips on how individuals can protect their mental health during these trying times, while also following guidelines set by health authorities to protect our physical health. VCOM also recommends these tips as guidelines to students:

**Know the signs and symptoms**

Stress during an infectious disease outbreak can sometimes cause the following:

- Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones, your financial situation or job, or loss of support services you rely on.
- Changes in sleep or eating patterns.
- Difficulty sleeping or concentrating.
- Worsening of chronic health problems.
- Worsening of mental health conditions.
- Increased use of tobacco, and/or alcohol and other substances.

People who may respond more strongly to the stress of a crisis include:

- People who are [at higher risk for severe illness](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID-19/clinicians-providers/community/susceptibility.html) from COVID-19 (for example, older people and people with underlying health conditions).
- Children and teens.
- People caring for family members or loved ones.
- Frontline workers such as health care providers and first responders, retail clerks, and others.
- Essential workers who work in the food industry.
- People who have existing mental health conditions.
- People who use substances or have a substance use disorder.
- People who have lost their jobs, had their work hours reduced, or had other major changes to their employment.
- People who have disabilities or developmental delay.
- People who are socially isolated from others, including people who live alone, and people in rural or frontier areas.
- People in some racial and ethnic minority groups.
- People who do not have access to information in their primary language.
• People experiencing homelessness.
• People who live in congregate (group) settings.

Healthy ways to cope with stress

Create structure

• Create a daily and/or weekly schedule. When working at home, have a dedicated study area in a location that is conducive to studying. Make it for study/work only and have all the things you need to make it your own.
• Set limits on time spent watching, reading or listening to news reports that cause you to feel anxious or distressed. A near-constant stream of news reports can be upsetting and distracting. Instead, seek CDC updates and practical guidelines at specific times during the day.
• Make space for activities and conversations that have nothing to do with the outbreak.
• Check in with yourself throughout the day to make sure you are in the driver’s seat of what you are doing with your mind and body. Minimize distractions while studying like phone and social media in order to maintain productivity and sense of control.

Maintain your physical health

• Aim for 7-9 hours of sleep most nights. Good quality, sufficient sleep not only helps to support your immune system but also helps you to better manage stress and regulate emotions. [See recommendations by the National Sleep Foundation.]
• Try to eat at regular times and opt for nutritious foods whenever possible. Some people may crave junk food or sugary snacks and be tempted to snack mindlessly when stressed or bored, and others may skip meals altogether.
• Maintain an exercise routine, even if you cannot go to the gym. Exercise at home using an online workout video, or go for a walk, run, or bike ride. Getting outside can also help to calm and reset your mind.

Stay Connected

• Taking care of your friends and your family can be a stress reliever, but it should be balanced with care for yourself. Helping others cope with their stress, such as providing social support, can also make your community stronger. During times of increased social distancing, people can still maintain social connections and care for their mental health. Virtual communication (like phones or video chats) can help you and your loved ones feel less lonely and isolated.
• Crises offer a time for community cohesion and social solidarity, and volunteering is one way to not only help others, but yourself as well. Science has repeatedly shown that volunteering can improve mental health. Check out this article for a list of organizations to donate to and this article for other ways to help your neighbors and community. You can also get involved with VCOM outreach opportunities.
• If you have children, talk to them honestly about what is going on in an age-appropriate manner. Help kids express their feelings in a positive way, whether playing in the backyard, drawing, or journaling. Check out these guides by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Child Mind Institute, or National Association of School Psychologists for tips on how to talk to your kids about coronavirus.
Take care of your spirit

- Find a place of worship that is streaming or recording services. If prayer is an important part of your life, make time for it. Stay connected to your church community through phone calls, emails, and video chats.
- Try meditation, deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, or another mindfulness or relaxation technique. Check out YouTube or phone apps such as Calm or Headspace for guided meditation exercises. Consider enlisting friends and family and practicing meditation together at least once a day. Mindfulness can help lower blood pressure, reduce stress, support your immune system, and protect brain health.

Continue or seek out mental health treatment

- If you are currently in mental health treatment, continue with your current plan if possible, being mindful of approaches to minimize contact with others. Consider reaching out to a mental health professional even if you haven’t before. Make sure you have ongoing access to any medications you need.
- Ask about video therapy or phone call appointments. Most states have already made emergency exemptions to insurance coverage for telehealth. Regulations have been temporarily relaxed to allow even non-medical software like Skype, Facetime, and Zoom to be used for telehealth. Contact your provider to ask about remote services.
- Avoid drugs and alcohol, particularly if you have a pre-existing mental health or substance use disorder. Check out online support groups and meetings, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Smart Recovery, and In The Rooms.
- The need for social distancing may make it difficult to see symptoms of depression in others. With social isolation, the in-person opportunities that we usually have to notice that friends, family, and colleagues may be struggling with a problem are no longer there. One way to think about it is that child abuse or intimate partner violence is missed more often in winter because long clothes cover bruises. Conduct regular "check ins" with your network and stay attuned to symptoms of depression, such as persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, loss of interest or pleasure in activities, or changes in sleep and weight.

Conclusion

Remember that the emotions you may be experiencing are normal reactions to difficult circumstances. Accept that things are different right now and everyone is adjusting. Prioritize what is most important and know that it is okay to let some things go right now.

Be kind to yourself and others. Try to stay positive and use this time to try things you have been putting off, such as learning a new skill, or getting in touch with your creative side. This is an opportunity to connect with classmates in a different way.

It can be hard to think past what is going on today, let alone in a week or in six months, but give yourself permission to daydream about the future and what is on the horizon. Remember that this is temporary, and things will return to normal.

Section 11

Coping with COVID-19: Strategies for VCOM Employees
EDWARD VIA COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

Section 11: COPING with COVID-19: Strategies for Employees

Mental Health Resources

A pandemic can cause high levels of stress, which will affect employees in different ways. Fear and anxiety can cause strong emotions that may exacerbate a pre-existing mental health condition and/or initiate new symptoms. It is important that employees take care of their mental health and have an awareness of any red flags that indicate a need for help.

For non-emergency counseling, contact a local health care provider. There are also national telehealth options available.

For a mental health care provider or substance abuse treatment:

- Employees who carry insurance through VCOM, can contact the Anthem Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for counseling options. https://www.anthem.com/employer/eap/employee/
  There is an online option (LiveHealth Online) for live therapy via smartphone, tablet or computer in order to get expert advice, a treatment plan, and medication, if needed.

- Employees can also contact the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) www.samhsa.gov/find-treatment 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

On-Campus Resources
- While VCOM’s on-campus Mental Health Counselors do not provide counseling services to employees, employees may seek the advice of these counselors as to employee’s next steps in dealing with their mental health issue and/or provide referrals and resources.
  - Carolinas Campus: Natalie M. Fadel, PsyD nfadel@carolinas.vcom.edu 864-327-On9875
  - Virginia Campus: Edward Magalhaes, PhD, LPC emagalhaes@vt.vcom.edu 540-231-1944
  - Auburn Campus: Mary A. Taylor, PhD, MS mtaylor@auburn.vcom.edu 334.442.4037
  - Louisiana Campus: David Boyle, PhD, LPC dboyle@ulm.vcom.edu 318.342.7100

For an immediate crisis:
- Call 911
- Disaster Distress Helpline: 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746. https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline
  Provides immediate crisis counseling to people affected by natural or human caused disasters.
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org, or Lifeline Crisis Chat to connect with a counselor via web chat. https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat/
- Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741 if you are in a crisis. Provides 24/7 mental health support via text message. www.crisistextline.org

The CDC and the School of Public Health from John’s Hopkins have created some tips on how individuals can protect their mental health during these trying times, while also following guidelines
set by health authorities to protect our physical health. VCOM has read and also recommends these tips as guidelines for VCOM employees:

How to cope with work-related stress and build resilience during a pandemic
Whether you are going into work or working from home, the COVID-19 pandemic has probably changed the way you work. Fear and anxiety about this new disease and other strong emotions can be overwhelming, and workplace stress can lead to burnout. How you cope with these emotions and stress can affect your well-being, the well-being of the people you care about, your workplace, and your community. During this pandemic, it is critical that you recognize what stress looks like, take steps to build your resilience and manage job stress, and know where to go if you need help.

Know the signs and symptoms of stress:

- Feeling anger, irritation, or in denial
- Feeling uncertain, nervous, or anxious
- Lacking motivation
- Feeling tired, overwhelmed, or burned out
- Feeling sad or depressed
- Having trouble sleeping
- Having trouble concentrating

Know the common work-related factors that can add to stress during a pandemic:

- Concern about the risk of being exposed to the virus at work
- Taking care of personal and family needs while working
- Managing a different workload
- Lack of access to the tools and equipment needed to perform your job
- Feelings that you are not contributing enough to work or guilt about not being on the frontline
- Uncertainty about the future of your workplace and/or employment
- Learning new communication tools and dealing with technical difficulties
- Adapting to a different workspace and/or work schedule

Follow these tips to build resilience and manage job stress:

- Communicate with your coworkers, supervisors, and employees about job stress while maintaining social distancing (at least 6 feet).
- Identify things that cause stress and work together to identify solutions.
- Talk openly with your supervisor and colleagues about how the pandemic is affecting work. Expectations should be communicated clearly by everyone.
- Ask about how to access mental health resources in your workplace.
- Identify those things, which you do not have control over and do the best you can with the resources available to you.
• Increase your sense of control by developing a consistent daily routine when possible — ideally one that is similar to your schedule before the pandemic.
  o Keep a regular sleep schedule.
  o Take breaks from work to stretch, exercise, or check in with your supportive colleagues, coworkers, family, and friends.
  o Spend time outdoors, either being physically active or relaxing.
  o If you work from home, set a regular time to end your work for the day, if possible.
  o Practice mindfulness techniques. www.mindful.org
  o Do things you enjoy during non-work hours.

• Know the facts about COVID-19. Be informed about how to protect yourself and others. Understanding the risk and sharing accurate information with people you care about can reduce stress and help you make a connection with others.
• Remind yourself that each of us has a crucial role in fighting this pandemic.
• Remind yourself that everyone is in an unusual situation with limited resources.
• Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting and mentally exhausting.
• Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns, how you are feeling, or how the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting you.
  o Connect with others through phone calls, email, text messages, mailing letters or cards, video chat, and social media.
  o Check on others. Helping others improves your sense of control, belonging, and self-esteem. Look for safe ways to offer social support to others, especially if they are showing signs of stress, such as depression and anxiety.
  o Crises offer a time for community cohesion and social solidarity. Science has repeatedly shown that volunteering can improve mental health. Check out this article for a list of organizations to donate to and this article for other ways to help your neighbors and community. You can also get involved with VCOM outreach opportunities.
  o If you have children, talk to them honestly about what is going on in an age-appropriate manner. Help kids express their feelings in a positive way, whether playing in the backyard, drawing, or journaling. Check out these guides by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Child Mind Institute, or National Association of School Psychologists for tips on how to talk to your kids about coronavirus.

• If you feel you may be misusing alcohol or other drugs (including prescription drugs) as a means of coping, reach out for help.
• If you are being treated for a mental health condition, continue with your treatment and be aware of any new or worsening symptoms.

Maintain your physical health

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• Aim for 7-9 hours of sleep most nights. Good quality, sufficient sleep not only helps to support your immune system but also helps you to better manage stress and regulate emotions. [See recommendations by the National Sleep Foundation.
• Try to eat at regular times and opt for nutritious foods whenever possible. Some people may crave junk food or sugary snacks and be tempted to snack mindlessly when stressed or bored, and others may skip meals altogether.
• Maintain an exercise routine, even if you cannot go to the gym. Exercise at home using an online workout video, or go for a walk, run, or bike ride. Getting outside can also help to calm and reset your mind.

Take care of your spirit
• Find a place of worship that is streaming or recording services. If prayer is an important part of your life, make time for it. Stay connected to your church community through phone calls, emails, and video chats.
• Try meditation, deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, or another mindfulness or relaxation technique. Check out YouTube or phone apps such as Calm or Headspace for guided meditation exercises. Consider enlisting friends and family and practicing meditation together at least once a day. Mindfulness can help lower blood pressure, reduce stress, support your immune system, and protect brain health.

Continue or seek out mental health treatment
• If you are currently in mental health treatment, continue with your current plan if possible, being mindful of approaches to minimize contact with others. Consider reaching out to a mental health professional even if you have not before. Make sure you have ongoing access to any medications you need.
• Ask about video therapy or phone call appointments. Most states have already made emergency exemptions to insurance coverage for telehealth. Regulations have been temporarily relaxed to allow even non-medical software like Skype, FaceTime, and Zoom to be used for telehealth. Contact your provider to ask about remote services.
• Avoid drugs and alcohol, particularly if you have a pre-existing mental health or substance use disorder. Check out online support groups and meetings, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Smart Recovery, and In The Rooms.
• The need for social distancing may make it difficult to see symptoms of depression in others. With social isolation, the in-person opportunities that we usually have to notice that friends, family, and colleagues may be struggling with a problem are no longer there. One way to think about it is that child abuse or intimate partner violence is missed more often in winter because long clothes cover bruises. Conduct regular "check-ins" with your network and stay attuned to symptoms of depression, such as persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, loss of interest or pleasure in activities, or changes in sleep and weight.

Conclusion
Remember that the emotions you may be experiencing are normal reactions to difficult circumstances. Accept that things are different right now and everyone is adjusting. Prioritize what is most important and know that it is okay to let some things go right now.
Be kind to yourself and others. Try to stay positive and use this time try things you have been putting off, such as learning a new skill, getting in touch with your creative side, or starting that project at work that has been on the back burner.

It can be hard to think past what is going on today, let alone in a week or in six months, but give yourself permission to daydream about the future and what is on the horizon. Remember that this is temporary, and things will return to normal.

Section 12

Required Curriculum for COVID-19 OMS-3 and OMS-4 VCOM Students on Clinical Experiences
In order to best prepare for the opportunity to care for patients with the novel SARS-CoV-2, students must be aware of the management perspectives and differences in severity of disease. In order to prepare for the possible scenarios, each student is required to complete the New England Journal of Medicine COVID-19 Primer exercise, the 5 simulated NEJM cases as well as the post-test administered by VCOM (to show understanding of the material). These must be completed by all OMS 3 and OMS 4 students, and must be done prior to any clinical rotations beginning June 1, 2020.

**COVID-19 Supplemental Curriculum**

**Learning Objectives:** Upon completion of this module, an OMS-3 or 4 learner will be able to:

1. Identify the significant risk factors for poor prognosis in COVID-19
2. Manage complications associated with severe COVID-19
3. Determine the best route to manage hypoxia for COVID-19 patients
4. Utilize the most recent guidelines to manage the disease manifestations

First step is to complete the COVID-19 Primer: [https://interactives.nejm.org/external/covid_simulation/index.html](https://interactives.nejm.org/external/covid_simulation/index.html)

The Second task within part 1 is to complete all 5 simulation cases: [https://covid19rx.nejm.org/landing/index.html?query=TOC](https://covid19rx.nejm.org/landing/index.html?query=TOC)

Third, upon sending attestation of completion to Clinical Affairs, complete the COVID-19 exam.

**COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment Supplemental Curriculum**

This learning module focuses upon preparing VCOM students who are entering or re-entering the clinical setting for learning in the context of COVID-19. The scope of this learning module is narrow as it is limited to key knowledge and actions necessary for VCOM OMS-3 and 4 learners to maximize their health and safety as well as protecting the health and safety of patients, patients’ family members, and Health Care Professionals (HCPs) encountered in the ambulatory setting. This knowledge and these initial actions prior to entering or re-entering the ambulatory settings are integral to the osteopathic physician identity formation and professionalism as informed and affected by the evolving COVID-19 pandemic. This module does not provide clinical management guidance.

**Learning Objectives:** Upon completion of this module, an OMS-3 or 4 learner will be able to:

1. Describe the categories of non-pharmaceutical interventions NPIs available for use in an ambulatory clinical setting to mitigate the spread of COVID-19
2. Recognize and be able to employ non-pharmaceutical interventions for the spread of COVID 19
3. Differentiate between Source Control masks and PPE masks
4. Recognize appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) utilized in ambulatory settings to decrease the spread of COVID-19
5. Identify the proper PPE to be used in one’s specific ambulatory clinical setting.
6. View videos provided by the CDC for proper Donning and Doffing of PPE
7. Recognize proper Donning of PPE and possible contamination/exposure points in this procedure
8. Recognize proper Doffing of PPE and possible contamination/exposure points in this procedure
Expectations

VCOM seeks to support a safe learning environment for its OMS-3 and 4 students in a clinical setting, whether outpatient or inpatient against the evolving health risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Providing instructional materials to students to promote avoidance of infection during clinical training is vital to the health of all.

VCOM OMS-3 and 4 students have a high professional responsibility to recognize in themselves COVID-19 symptoms at the earliest stages and quickly take personal actions to protect their health as well as to protect the health of all those with whom they may have contact. This is physician professionalism at its most basic.

By providing this PPE educational information, if diligently learned and properly applied, students should be able to protect themselves and others from exposure. This learned information and skills should be transferrable by the VCOM student to any core site or rotation site across the nation. Students should have already learned the signs and symptoms of COVID 19 infection from the additional information sent by VCOM and in review of the Self -Triage and Initial Actions Modules.

1. To reiterate and stress the non-pharmaceutical interventions please see the following CDC links:
   - [how to avoid spreading germs at work](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html)

2. For Using Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) please be sure to watch the donning video and then the doffing video.
   - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YYTATw9yav4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YYTATw9yav4)

Please be aware that different ambulatory clinics may have different PPE requirements and different ways of triaging patients AND employees (students) before entering the facility.

STUDENTS SHOULD PAY ATTENTION TO THE REQUIRED PPE FOR EACH OF THE CLINICAL SITES IN WHICH HE OR SHE IS ENTERING AS EACH FACILITY AND EACH ROTATION MAY HAVE DIFFERENT REQUIREMENTS.

To assure you are prepared, the student MUST read the following and learn the definitions:


Summary

As one can see from the information from the CDC links above there is much information about PPE and proper use as it relates to COVID 19. Also, not all facilities and patient care settings interpret and/or apply the CDC recommendations in the same way. There may be variances in guidance based on state health department regulations. It is imperative that VCOM students know the differences between source control equipment and Personal Protective Equipment and to when and how to use each. It is also imperative that VCOM students find out in advance the requirements for entrance to the different ambulatory clinical settings in which you are training, so she or he will be prepared upon arrival to the practice or patient care facility.

Additional information

- Links to a one hour CDC QA session [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9p10jSld9s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9p10jSld9s)
- Link to 3M respirator data [https://multimedia.3m.com/mws/media/17915000/comparison-ffp2-kn95-n95-filtering-facepiece-respirator-classes-tb.pdf](https://multimedia.3m.com/mws/media/17915000/comparison-ffp2-kn95-n95-filtering-facepiece-respirator-classes-tb.pdf)
Forms

Attestation Forms for OMS-1 and OMS-2 students, OMS-3 and OMS-4 students and Employees
OMS 1 and 2 Attestation Form for Returning to Campus

Q1
Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine
OMS-1 and OMS-2 Medical Student Attestation Form
for Returning to Campus During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Q2 Last Name

Q3 First Name

Q4 I am a student on the:

☐ Auburn Campus

☐ Carolinas Campus

☐ Louisiana Campus

☐ Virginia Campus
Q5 I am an:

- OMS-1 student  ________________________________________________
- OMS-2 student  ________________________________________________

Q6 I have read the "VCOM Return to Campus Policy During the COVID-19 Outbreak" document and am providing these responses as attestation.

- I agree
- I do not agree

Q7 I attest that to the best of my knowledge I have not been exposed to COVID-19 and am following the practices recommended by the CDC to avoid exposure to COVID-19.

- I agree
- I do not agree (please explain)

Q8 I agree to follow VCOM’s standards and CDC requirements as recommended to avoid the spread of COVID-19.

- I agree
- I do not agree
Q9 I understand that I am not to return to campus without prior written approval if I have had COVID-19, if I have been a person under investigation for COVID-19, or if I have been directly exposed to COVID-19. I also understand a time of self-quarantine may be required.

- I understand and agree
- I do not agree

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Q10 I am attesting that I do not meet any of the criteria for being considered a person at increased risk for complications from COVID-19 (as described in the policy). I also understand that it would be a breach of ethics to not inform the COVID-19 officer of this risk prior to my return to campus.

- I agree
- I do not agree (please explain)

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Q11 I attest that I am not living with a person that meets the criteria for increased risk for complications from COVID-19 infection and understand that I am obligated to inform the COVID-19 officer if I am living with a person who is at increased risk for complications prior to my return to campus.

- I agree
- I do not agree (please explain)

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Q12 I understand that returning to classes is an individual decision and involves a risk of contracting the coronavirus, as does performing the everyday tasks of shopping, eating out, and other social interactions with people and am assuming the risk by my return.

- I understand and agree
- I do not agree
Q13 I understand that if I choose not to return to on-campus activities there will be no academic consequences from VCOM beyond a delay in the program or graduation date.

- I understand and agree
- I do not agree

Q14 By the act of returning to campus, I understand that I assume the risk of possibly contracting COVID-19 despite following the CDC-recommended precautions that I have taken and that VCOM has provided; and the risks assumed include, but are not limited to, the possibility of personal illness, injury, lengthy hospitalization, requiring the use of a ventilator, permanent disability, and possibly even death; and understand these are not risks the College is able to mitigate other than to continue to follow the CDC and state and local guidelines to the best of their ability and by asking all employees and students follow these same guidelines; and by my return I also wave and release any claim or right of action against VCOM, its Board of Directors, officers, faculty, staff, and other personnel arising out of and/or in connection with COVID-19 or in the event any person contracts COVID-19 whether the infection occurs before, during, or after participation in any VCOM program or activity.

- I understand and agree
- I do not agree

Q15 I am unable to sign this document and request a follow up meeting with the COVID-19 officer, who is the Associate Dean for Student Affairs on my campus. A follow-up meeting with the Campus Dean may also be required to assure the best possible plan is developed for the student.

- I am unable to agree with all of the attestations in this survey and request a meeting with the COVID-19 Officer.

Q16 By signing below, I hereby acknowledge that I have completely read and fully understand VCOM's policy regarding the return to campus during the COVID-19 pandemic. I also affirm the truth of the above statements:
Attestation Form for Returning to Clinical Rotations for OMS-3 and OMS-4 Students

Q1
Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine
OMS-3 and OMS-4 Medical Student Attestation Form
for Returning to Clinical Rotations During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Q2 Last Name

Q3 First Name

Q4 I am a student on the:

○ Auburn Campus

○ Carolinas Campus

○ Virginia Campus
Q5 I am an:

- ☐ OMS-3 student in the following core clinical site:
- ☐ OMS-4 student who will complete my core rotations (does not include audition rotations) in the following core clinical site:

Q6 I have read the "VCOM Response History and Requirements Under COVID-19 for Students Returning to Clinical Rotations" document and all required references and am providing this document as attestation.

- ☐ I agree
- ☐ I do not agree

Q7 I attest that to the best of my knowledge I have not been exposed to COVID-19 and am following the practices recommended by the CDC to avoid exposure to COVID-19.

- ☐ I agree
- ☐ I do not agree (please explain)

Q8 I agree to follow VCOM’s standards and CDC requirements as recommended to avoid the spread of COVID-19.

- ☐ I agree
- ☐ I do not agree
Q9 I understand that I am not to return to campus without prior written approval if I have had COVID-19, if I have been a person under investigation for COVID-19, or if I have been directly exposed to COVID-19. I also understand a time of self-quarantine may be required for a student who is on clinical rotations prior to returning to campus.

- [ ] I understand and agree
- [ ] I do not agree

Q10 I am attesting that I do not meet any of the criteria for being considered a person at increased risk for complications from COVID-19 (as described in the policy). I also understand that it would be a breach of ethics to not inform the COVID-19 officer of this risk prior to my return to clinical rotations. I understand that if I do have these criteria, I may qualify for an altered educational plan or leave and this will be discussed upon my notification regarding my status.

- [ ] I agree
- [ ] I do not agree (please explain)

Q11 I attest that I am not living with a person that meets the criteria for increased risk for complications from COVID-19 infection and understand that I am obligated to inform the COVID-19 officer if I am living with a person who is at increased risk for complications prior to my return to campus. I understand that I may be granted a leave or an altered educational plan where possible.

- [ ] I agree
- [ ] I do not agree (please explain)

Q12 I understand that I am to follow the self-quarantine between my OMS-3 clinical rotations and that failure to do so before beginning a new clinical rotation site is considered a breach of professionalism and ethical standards. I also understand this self-quarantine will prevent travel
and the time is to be spent on completing the educational modules and testing (and is not vacation time, and is not time where I should travel outside the area).

- I understand and agree
- I do not agree

---

Q13 I understand that I may (or may not be) required to self-quarantine between my OMS-4 clinical rotations and that where required failure to do so is considered a breach of professionalism and ethical standards. I also understand this self-quarantine will prevent travel and the time is to be spent on completing the educational modules and testing (and is not vacation time, and is not time where I should travel outside the area).

- I understand and agree
- I do not agree

---

Q14 Special Instructions for students returning to a main VCOM campus from the clinical environment: When the CAMPUS opens, students who have recently been exposed to COVID-19 patients or patients under investigation for COVID-19, will be restricted from certain work or educational environments. Students who meet this description should contact their COVID-19 officer and will be instructed on a one by one basis on their ability to return, the requirements for self-quarantine, and the workspaces they will be restricted to. Students who do not abide by the above instructions and the restrictions that are placed on them by the College for returning to campus will be considered to be engaging in unethical or unprofessional behavior by placing others at risk. Students on clinical rotations where COVID-19 patients have been present or any possible exposure exists, will not be allowed on campus or on their next clinical rotation unless they have self-quarantined for a minimum of 10 days and show no symptoms.

- I understand and agree
- I do not agree

---

Q15 I understand that returning to rotations is an individual decision and involves a risk of contracting the coronavirus, as does performing everyday activities such as shopping, eating out, and other social functions where other people are present.
During the pandemic, no student is required to attend rotations and by exercising this option there will be no adverse academic consequences from VCOM beyond delay in the program and graduation date.

By returning to rotations, just as utilizing other facilities for everyday activity, students assume the responsibility to be vigilant in their activities, hygiene, and social distancing, and assume the risk of possibly contracting the coronavirus despite the CDC-recommended precautions taken by the individual and by VCOM. These risks assumed by students include, but are not limited to, the possibility of personal illness, injury, lengthy hospitalization, requiring the use of a ventilator, permanent disability and possibly even death. These are not health risks the College is able to mitigate except by following the CDC and local guidelines to the best of their ability and by asking that all students be aware of and follow these same guidelines.

By the act of returning to rotations, each student acknowledges he or she has read VCOM’s policy and information regarding COVID-19, understands the same, assumes the risks described herein, and waives and releases any claim or right of action against VCOM, its board of directors, officers, faculty, staff and other personnel arising out of and/or in connection with COVID-19 or in the event any person contracts the coronavirus (COVID-19), whether a COVID-19 infection occurs before, during, or after participation in any VCOM program or activity.

☐ I understand and agree

☐ I do not agree

Q16 I am unable to sign this document and request a follow up meeting with the COVID-19 officer, who is the appropriate Associate Dean on my campus (OMS-3 or OMS-4). A follow-up meeting with the appropriate Campus Dean may also be required to assure the best possible plan is developed for the student.

☐ I am unable to agree with all of the attestations in this survey and request a meeting with the COVID-19 Officer.

Q17 By signing below, I hereby acknowledge that I have completely read and fully understand VCOM’s policy regarding the return to clinical rotations during the COVID-19 pandemic. I also affirm the truth of the above statements:
Faculty and Staff Attestation Form for Returning to Campus

Q1
Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine
Faculty and Staff Attestation Form
for Returning to Campus During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Q2 Last Name
________________________________________________________________

Q3 First Name
________________________________________________________________

Q4 I am an employee on the:

○ Auburn Campus
○ Carolinas Campus
○ Louisiana Campus
○ Virginia Campus
Q5 I have read the guidance document for returning to campus and am providing these responses as attestation.

○ I agree

○ I do not agree

Q6 I agree to follow VCOM’s standards and CDC requirements as recommended to avoid the spread of COVID-19. I also attest that I have read the additional educational materials provided on the CDC website.

○ I agree

○ I do not agree

Q7 I attest that to the best of my knowledge I have not been exposed to COVID-19 in the past 14 days and am following the practices recommended by the CDC to avoid exposure to COVID-19.

○ I agree

○ I do not agree (please explain)

Q8 I understand that I am not to return to campus without prior written approval if I have had COVID-19, if I have been a person under investigation for COVID-19, or if I have been directly exposed to COVID-19. I also understand a time of self-quarantine may be required.

○ I understand and agree

○ I do not agree
Q9 I am attesting that I do not meet any of the criteria for being considered a person at increased risk for complications from COVID-19 (as described in the policy). I also understand that it would be a breach of ethics to not inform the COVID-19 point of contact of this risk prior to my return to campus.

- I agree
- I do not agree (please explain)

Q10 I attest that I am not living with a person that meets the criteria for increased risk for complications from COVID-19 infection and understand that I am obligated to inform the COVID-19 point of contact if I am living with a person who is at increased risk for complications prior to my return to campus.

- I agree
- I do not agree (please explain)

Q11 I understand that returning to work on campus is an individual decision and involves a risk of contracting the coronavirus, as does performing the everyday tasks of shopping, eating out, and other social interactions with people and am assuming the risk by my return.

- I understand and agree
- I do not agree
Q12 Special Instructions for clinical faculty and staff participating in clinical care: When the campus opens, employees who participate in the clinical care of COVID-19 patients or patients under investigation for COVID-19, may be restricted from certain work or educational environments. Employees who meet this description, (primarily clinical faculty and staff) will be instructed on a one by one basis on their ability to return, the requirements for self-quarantine, and the workspaces they will be restricted to. Such employees who do not abide by the instructions and restrictions placed on them by the College will be considered to be engaging in unethical or unprofessional behavior by placing others at risk.

I have read the above instructions and attest I will follow the instructions above and will notify my immediate supervisor and the COVID-19 point of contact to determine my workplace restrictions or if I believe I am unable to comply with this document.

☐ I understand and agree

☐ I do not agree

☐ This does not apply to me

Q13 By the act of returning to campus, I understand that I assume the risk of possibly contracting COVID-19 despite following the CDC-recommended precautions that I have taken and that VCOM has provided; and the risks assumed include, but are not limited to, the possibility of personal illness, injury, lengthy hospitalization, requiring the use of a ventilator, permanent disability, and possibly even death; and understand these are not risks the College is able to mitigate other than to continue to follow the CDC and state and local guidelines to the best of their ability and by asking all employees and students follow these same guidelines; and by my return I also wave and release any claim or right of action against VCOM, its Board of Directors, officers, faculty, staff, and other personnel arising out of and/or in connection with COVID-19 or in the event any person contracts COVID-19 whether the infection occurs before, during, or after participation in any VCOM program or activity.

☐ I understand and agree

☐ I do not agree

Q14 I am at high risk or am living with a person at high risk and I request a follow up meeting with the COVID-19 point of contact and the appropriate administrative officer. It is my
responsibility to provide this information in writing to the COVID-19 point of contact and to assure a meeting follows.

- I am at high risk or am living with a person at high risk and I request a follow up meeting with the COVID-19 point of contact.

- I am NOT at high risk or living with a person at high risk.

Q15 By signing below, I hereby acknowledge that I have completely read and fully understand VCOM's policy regarding the return to campus during the COVID-19 pandemic. I also affirm the truth of the above statements: