

COVID-19 Testing Webinar Questions and Answers

Theme	Question	Answer
Contact Tracing	Why are positive cases at WesternU not being reported (in students and employees)? For example many schools have a dashboard that is updated with # of positive cases (Not asking for who or department). It would help with assuring that the University is keeping their staff safe and would improve communication between the University and its employees.	The university does publish a dashboard. It can be found at <a href="https://www.westernu.edu/return-to-campus/covid-19-statistics/">https://www.westernu.edu/return-to-campus/covid-19-statistics/</a> and it is updated on a weekly basis. The dashboard includes positive cases reported to the University, which even includes individuals that have not been on campus. Cases closed is reports received that were investigated and includes symptoms, exposures, and positive cases. The contact tracing team notifies identified WesternU close contacts directly of a potential exposure to a known COVID case.
WesternU Remote-Operational Status	Is remote learning going to continue in 2021-2022? If so, how many days a week (or which courses) will this be an option/ will it be required to be in person? I am part of our college Promotion and Tenure committee and I have to attend a class on interfolio that will be used for posting our P&T. I believe that all the colleges' P&T members will be attending - will this webinar be held at a different time where we can view it?	The decision to continue with remote didactic learning will be driven by the infection rates that the local public health authorities are seeing in the surrounding communities. Until they have cleared us to resume on campus lectures, we have to comply with their regulations.  We are recording the webinar and will make it available for asynchronous viewing. If there is enough demand, we may hold an additional in-person session.
Students Clearance for On-campus	Will students coming to campus for essential labs need to be temperature checked before entering buildings? What will be the procedure for receiving clearance to come onto campus for guest lecturers? When can students who are returning to campus for the first time after January 19th sign up for testing?	All students, faculty, employees, and visitors must complete the WesternU COVID-19 Self-Screening survey ( <a href="https://westernu.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0id55fjhqRBRgMd">https://westernu.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0id55fjhqRBRgMd</a> ) on the day of their on-campus visit, prior to arrival. We are awaiting the arrival of electronic temperature sensing machines. They will likely be deployed in the HPC, HEC and PCC. This decision was based on the number of employees and students who are scheduled to be on campus over the coming weeks. All visitors must have an essential reason for being on campus, e.g., Major repair of equipment and they must also complete the WesternU COVID-19 Self-Screening survey ( <a href="https://westernu.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0id55fjhqRBRgMd">https://westernu.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0id55fjhqRBRgMd</a> ) on the day of their on-campus visit, prior to arrival. If they are symptomatic, they will receive the same red screen as our employees and students. They will not be allowed on campus. RT-PCR and rapid antigen testing will continue to be available Monday-Friday from 7:30am-2:45pm through Friday, February 5. We will provide updated dates and times for testing beyond February 5 as college/unit as test volume needs are identified and logistics worked out.
COVID-19 Testing: General	If a staff member is not scheduled to be on campus on a daily or weekly basis, but would like to come on campus to pick-up something from their office, are they required to take the RT-PCR test? How many days before coming to campus should the COVID test be performed? If we are not from the area to receive the testing on campus, is testing covered by our personal insurance every time we need to do it? Wouldn't it be more useful to have everyone tested for presence of antibodies to the SARS-2-Cov-19 virus? That would indicate immunity. If someone has a negative PCR test one day, it can become positive the following day or any day thereafter and no one would know it. Will testing times and days be expanded? We have classes during the hours of 9-2:45 pm M-F (the current testing times offered). Expanding times into the evening and offering testing on Saturdays/Sundays would be helpful. Will the vaccine cost money? If so, how much and is it covered by insurance?	No. If you are going to be on campus for a short period of time, e.g., less than two hours, and have little to no interaction with others, you do not need to have an RT-PCR test performed. You will still need to complete the Self-Screening survey prior to coming to campus and will be required to follow PPE, social-distancing, and other university safety protocols at all times you are on campus. If you require an RT-PCR, you need to be tested at least 3 to 5 days (no more than 7 days). This allows time for the lab to process your test results and get them back to you prior to your coming on campus. If it is a rapid antigen, you will get the results within 15 minutes of handing your specimen to a test center staff member. If either test is positive, you will be contacted by the university's Contact Tracing Team and advised not to come to campus or leave campus. We cannot answer that given the number of health insurance plans students/employees have, therefore we recommend you contact your insurance carrier. Many have this information on their webpages. Also, most counties continue to have free testing sites. If you type in the name of the city you live in followed by COVID testing, it will show you a list of locations that provide this service. Some have specific criteria you must meet in order to get an appointment for testing. It is still not known how long the antibodies will last and we do not have quantitative data to determine if someone is immune or not. We can test them today and 3 weeks from now, their levels could begin to decline to the point where they are susceptible to being reinfected. The daily screening survey, PPE, social distancing, and contact tracing have been used effectively to prevent the spread of COVID-19 on campus. CRT has received anticipated needs from the Colleges and Operating Units very recently. CRT will collaborate with each of the Colleges and Operating Units to develop a plan to have convenient testing availability prioritizing the normal work and school week. At this point in time, WesternU does not have any instructions from the local public health authority on how we are to handle all of the vaccine related issues.
COVID-19 Testing: Frequency	Do we need to present a negative COVID test every single time we report to campus? If we are from out of the county, do we need to do a COVID test every time before we come on campus? We have essential support personnel who are on-call and will come to campus on an as-needed basis. This may mean they are not on campus on all during a month or are on campus once a week. Once the on-call worker gets the baseline test and gets a negative test result, can they just take the rapid test on an as-needed basis instead of having to come in to participate in the monthly subset of cohort testing?	No. You will only need a negative baseline RT-PCR prior to coming to campus and will be a part of the 25% random testing monthly. No. You do not. Travel related to training essential workforce is acceptable. Individuals coming to campus on a regular basis in any given month will need to receive an antigen test sometime during that month. We will be testing 25% of the on-campus population each week. Colleges are responsible for scheduling their students and employees for the monthly rapid antigen testing and administrative units for scheduling their employees. Supervisors should ensure anyone who is on campus more than intermittently in a given month participates in the testing.
COVID-19 Testing: Asymptomatic Testers	If we take a PCR test when asymptomatic, and it is negative, you would think that it will always be negative. But the athletes playing games these days are getting daily testing. The test can turn positive any day and exposure is not always clear. So how is it that you are comfortable admitting people back on campus after only one test done two days before coming to campus for the first time? What about everyday thereafter? If someone has any symptoms whatsoever they may get a test but what about asymptomatic carriers through the course of the semester; How will you detect them?	The university recognizes this issue and believe we have to do some form of testing that will help to identify those individuals who may be infectious but not showing any symptoms. So far, we have identified 14 and have stopped them from coming to class/clinicals/work. It is not possible to testing of every person coming onto campus every day. The daily screening survey, PPE, social distancing, and contact tracing has been used effectively to prevent the spread of COVID-19 on campus thus far. We are performing rapid antigen testing on up to 25% of all individuals coming to campus on a weekly basis. The intent is to be able to test everyone at least monthly. Monitor for outbreaks and for surveillance. If the individual as a positive rapid antigen with it be confirmed with RT-PCR.
COVID-19 Testing: Results	Who do we send proof of the negative COVID test to? Where will the results of RT-PCR tests be stored to be in HIPAA compliance? How will the results be received by patient?	Please send any COVID-19 test result to: Pomona Campus - covidtesting@westernu.edu or Oregon Campus - covidtesting-oregon@westernu.edu Student-Employee Health will be the record keeper. Only those authorized by this department are allowed access to this information. As to receiving test results, if you have an RT-PCR you will receive them from the reference lab. If you receive a rapid antigen, you will know within 15 minutes of the test what the results are.
COVID-19 Vaccine for Students	Is there any information about the vaccines and the timeline/logistics of vaccine distribution to students? When will medical students on clinical rotations be receiving the vaccine and how will it be distributed? When are Western students expected to have access to the vaccine? In other words, are we grouped in with the general public in terms of having access or are we part of a group that gets earlier access since we're med students? Also, will Western be distributing vaccines to students or should we expect to get them through our own health care providers (if we have private medical insurance outside of the school's)? Students want to be contacted about these news through their emails, rather than through word-of-mouth or Facebook posts. Will the school be able to provide a running list of neighboring hospitals that provide vaccinations to students? If a student has received a vaccination from a local hospital, how will they report it to the school? Is it possible to receive a vaccination from the school and receive the second vaccination from a different location? Will there be a way to opt out of the vaccination program from the school if the students can receive their vaccination from elsewhere? Some students have mentioned that they would not want the university to order too many vaccines if they are able to obtain their vaccine from other places.	The university has been designated as a vaccine administration site. However, we have yet to receive any vaccine from the state or county health departments. Even when we do receive it, we can only administer it as mandated by the health department or we risk losing the ability to provide COVID-19 vaccines. At this time, students are advised to receive the vaccine, if available, through their clinical sites. Students may be able to receive the COVID vaccine through county locations, this would require a WesternU ID and a letter from their College/Department stating they are in the clinical settings where vaccines are currently available. WesternU Health Oliver station has been approved as a vaccine administration site 1/13/21. We are now in the process of preparing our policies and procedures to accept the vaccines from the state. We are in contact with local public health authorities at this time trying to arrange for vaccines to be provided so that we can immunize as many students and employees who are providing direct and indirect patient care as possible. As of this webinar, we have not heard back from them. We have no idea. If you are at a clinical rotation site and they offer the vaccine, get it. Keep the immunization card you are given as you MUST get the same type of vaccine 3-4 weeks later. Given WesternU does not have any COVID-19 vaccine at this time, it is recommended you reach out to your individual healthcare provider to see if they will be able to assist you. In Oregon, all medical students are classified as Phase 1a and we are sending students to state and county run vaccine clinics. Once we hear from DPH/La County officials, university will send out an email with the information on how register for the vaccine. The hospital/location is required to provide immunization cards with the date and lot number. Please send a copy of the immunization card to stu-emphealth@westernu.edu with a subject line "COVID Vaccine" Currently, the university is awaiting more information from dept. of public health and county officials for the estimated time of arrival of vaccine. It is recommended to please complete the series where it is started Please make sure to get vaccinated if you fall into the category that is recommended by public health officials. After you complete the series please send a copy of the immunization card to stu-emphealth@westernu.edu with a subject "COVID Vaccine"
	With such a limited supply of vaccines would it be best practice to ensure that vulnerable populations get the vaccine prior to low risk populations? Why as large as WU is in this area with all the numbers of employees and students ALL in healthcare, did we NOT secure Covid19 vaccination for our population instead of having our students and staff "run around" desperately trying to secure a vaccination with horrible waiting lines, etc. Who dropped the ball? This is not a testing question but a question for the CRT about vaccination. LA County public health has advised Phase 1a Veterinarians to seek vaccination at their place of work. Can you indicate when WesternU will begin vaccination. Thank you for all of your hard work.	When WesternU does get the COVID-19 vaccine, we must follow the mandates that come with it. WesternU has been in touch with the public health dept and local authorities. We've been approved as a vaccination provider site, however, public health has taken the step to mass immunize larger populations by creating Mega-PODs such as stadiums etc. In Pomona, Fairplex has been determined to be the Mega-POD site. We will respect and follow state and public health mandates. Veterinarians are going to be in Phase 1B of the vaccination roll-out for LA County. The university will follow the guidelines from public health officials and vaccines will be administered based on phase allocation.

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<p><b>COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution</b></p>	<p>Some students have expressed that they would potentially like to volunteer to administer vaccines at the PCC for other people. Is this something that can be done or are there liability issues preventing students from volunteering in this manner? I believe they explicitly mentioned volunteering, not like a clinical rotation at PCC.</p>	<p>Once we hear from LA County DPH an ETA on the vaccines, we can plan to have students volunteer with administration of the vaccines.</p>
	<p>A student (I believe DVM) said she was entering clinicals very soon and wanted to know if certain colleges had a priority system for who is receiving the vaccine first. For example, the colleges that are meeting patients earlier receive the vaccine first, followed by students who are rotating later, etc.</p>	<p>The university will follow the guidelines from public health officials and vaccines will be administered based on phase allocation.</p>
	<p>I wasn't sure which programs exactly but some students want to receive vaccinations from some of the local hospitals that are offering it to students. However, not every program has given ID cards for the students, so is there any way for a student to pick up an ID card? (I believe this may be a college specific question that could be asked to the college's local administration but I wanted to leave it here anyway.) And what about students that lost their ID cards during lockdown/quarantine?</p>	<p>Please reach out directly to your College or Department regarding ID cards. If one has not been received, they can assist with issuing your ID cards. They can also facilitate the replacement process for lost cards. Your College can also provide a letter stating that you are rotating in one of the tiers that is currently able to receive the vaccine. The letter with your WesternU ID card should allow you to receive the vaccine at one of the available sites.</p>

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Will there be a rapid antigen test available on campus soon? They have said that they are not doing those on campus anymore.	Yes, rapid antigen will be available.
How was it decided to return to campus right now considering we, LA county, are in one of the largest surges to date ?	In accordance with local public health authorities, institutions of higher education may continue to offer in person training and instruction for essential workforce for required activities that cannot be accomplished through virtual learning. Students have been on campus for these activities since summer and with use of PPE, contact tracing, and social distancing we have managed to keep campus spread at a minimum. This semester, testing is being implemented to further protect the health of our campus community.
Why was it decided to complete weekly lab sessions compared to several more extensive in person sessions	Weekly lab session were planned based upon the college's curriculum plans.
will WesternU faculty, students, staff get priority in making reservations for vaccinations on campus before it opens to greater community? *Pomona Campus	We will be following local and state public health guidelines; however, we will be sending out information letting the campus community know about what the vaccination phase criteria are if any WesternU affiliated person meets the criteria, we will be able to provide the vaccination.
If you have tested positive for COVID while working remotely, do you need to report that positive test to WesternU	Yes. Please contact COVIDtesting@westernu.edu (Pomona) or COVIDtesting-Oregon@westernu.edu (Lebanon). Please do not send the CRT with any FERPA or HIPAA related information.
Is this statement from the consent form still correct, "Each asymptomatic employee or student coming onto WesternU's campus for at least 2.5 days or more per week will be asked to undergo COVID testing at least 1-3 days prior to their initial return to campus."? Meaning that employees do not need to test if they are on campus less than 20 hours a week?	All students returning to campus for curriculum and clinical activities must take an RT-PCR baseline test. If post-COVID diagnosis in the past 90 days, you must receive a rapid antigen test instead. If you have completed the vaccination series with and more than two weeks since last does, you may be subject to rapid antigen testing (must send documentation to Student Employee Health - stu-emphealth@westernu.edu) All employees returning to campus at least 1 day per week for more than 2 hours per day must take an RT-PCR baseline test. If post-COVID diagnosis in the past 90 days, you must receive a rapid antigen test instead. If you have completed the vaccination series and more than two weeks since last does, you may be subject to rapid antigen testing (must send documentation to Student Employee Health - stu-emphealth@westernu.edu) Any individual on campus 2 or more hours per week is subject to take a rapid antigen test each month (testing schedule assigned by college/unit). Others may be included as directed by the operating unit.
I missed the first 10 minutes of this meeting, will a recording or transcript be available after?	Yes, this webinar is being recorded and written answers to all submitted will be shared with the WesternU community at the end of next week. Thank you for your question.
If a COVID 19 employee tested positive and placed on a ventilator should that employee get the vaccine when available?	Please contact your healthcare provider.
What are responses to false negatives in asymptomatic individuals?	We do not have enough clinical information to answer this question. Clinical correlation is needed in order to answer this question.
What is the procedure for outside vendors coming to campus?	In the event of a declared emergency, like this pandemic, where a threat to public health is posed, no employees, staff, faculty, students or visitors will be allowed on campus unless they are deemed as essential personnel. For example any vendor conducting building maintenance, construction, installation, delivery of goods may be on campus, or students being on campus for hands on clinical skills curriculum. All essential visitors are required to complete the Qualtrics Self-Screen Survey as a guest and to comply with WesternU safety guidelines as published on the Return to Campus website. The CRT approves on a case-by-case basis depending on if the activity being conducted by the visitor meets the guidelines for an essential activity as defined by state and local authorities. When vendors complete the Qualtrics Self-Screening Survey, they will need to provide a WesternU employee's name and e-mail as the their point of contact during their visit to the campus. In the event of an identified exposure incident, a member of the Contact Tracing team will contact the vendor to advise them of the exposure incident.
Can you please advise on the start date for the 25% surveillance testing with the rapid antigen testing?	Start dates for surveillance testing will be college specific.
Some students in my college are wondering if the vaccines are mandatory? And if so, is there a date that both doses need to be done by?	Not at the present time. If you are eligible to take the vaccination, the CDC highly recommends you take the vaccine. Please contact your healthcare provider.
When will the testing schedule for next week be released? I am returning to campus on Friday 1/22 and the Qualtrics for still says "If you are returning to campus for the first time after January 19th, additional test dates and information will be forthcoming."	According to your return date, a RT-PCR Test administered on Friday, 1/15/21 would suffice as a baseline test for your return according to CRT policies. Though it may be ideal to wait until after the long weekend, that may cause undue stress on the reference laboratory and yourself to be able to provide your (hopefully) negative result prior to your return. Wishing you continued health.
To confirm, all pre-clinical WesternU students qualify to receive the vaccine? Thank you! If I followed Dr. Houston-Browns email guidance on 1/3/2021 and sent my test results to COVIDTesting@westernu.edu, and not to student/employee health, were HIPAA guidelines violated in my case? "If you had COVID testing outside of WesternU in the past 7 days, you MUST submit your test results to COVIDTesting@westernu.edu to be cleared for return on campus." I also didn't get any response if I was cleared for return to campus.	Please reference the vaccination Phases for California and Oregon to determine your eligibility. Sending test results to COVIDTesting@westernu.edu is the correct process. This mailbox is managed by Student Employee Health and setup for the sole purpose of receiving COVID test results.