

As information and events are in process and can change, please refer to the [Fall Opening FAQs](#) for the most up-to-date information about the College's plans for reopening.

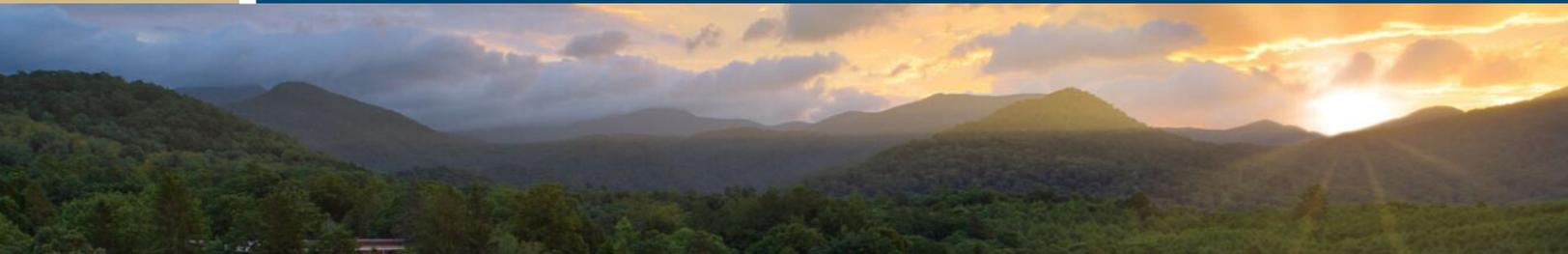


Warren Wilson  
COLLEGE

# Owl in this Together: WWC COVID-19 Guidelines to Reopening

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June 30, 2020

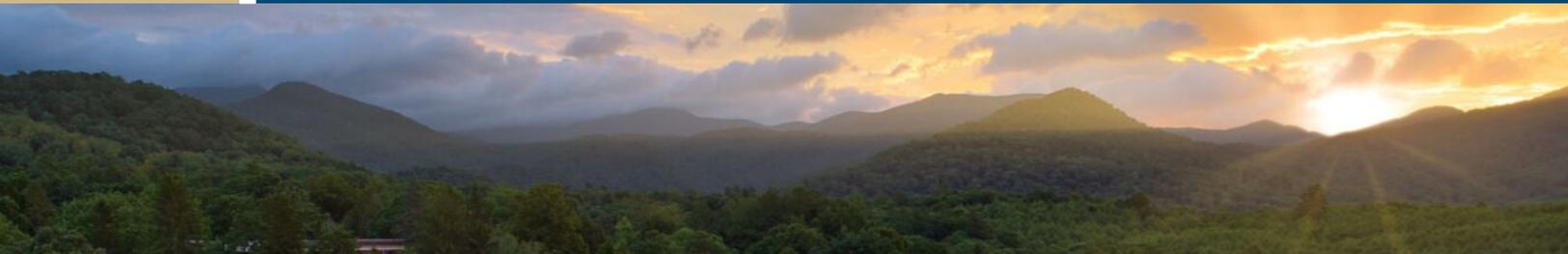




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## 1. Introduction from President Morton

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Dear Warren Wilson students, families, and employees,

As of this writing, coronavirus cases are increasing across the country. It is clear that this increase is largely due to Americans not following Center for Disease Control (CDC) protocols to prevent spread of the virus. Right now, our plan is to open and to remain open throughout the fall semester. Our ability to open will be contingent on whether North Carolina and surrounding states can move forward their phased reopenings. We will share more detail in the coming weeks in order to further support our community. Our decisions continue to be informed by state and county health officials.

We will post additional updates on our coronavirus page, [www.warren-wilson.edu/coronavirus](http://www.warren-wilson.edu/coronavirus), where you can also review all information sent to date and new information as it is determined. We plan to share an FAQ page with answers to your questions as they emerge with the first round of questions answered by July 10. You can submit your questions in [this form](#).

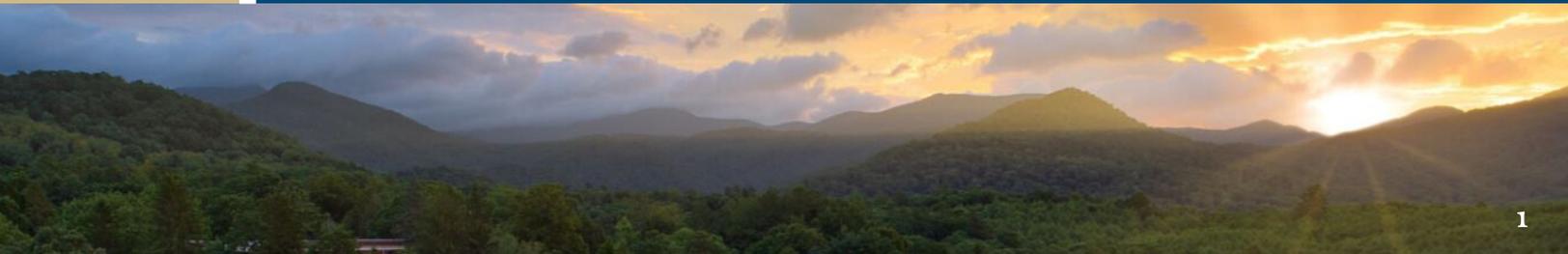
Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, our first priority has been the well-being of the members of our community. This publication, “Owl in this Together: WWC COVID-19 Guidelines to Reopening”, shares the significant updates, protocols, and plans determined as of June 30th, 2020, providing the context for our return this fall if we are able to reopen as planned.

We have partnered with the Mountain Area Health and Education Center (MAHEC), alongside five higher education institutions in our region (UNCA, Mars Hill, Brevard, Montreat, and Western Carolina) to research and determine protocols based on best practices that continue to be developed.

We know this year will be different than previous years. Our focus will be our Community Commitment—a commitment we’ll make to each other to optimize our collective well-being. If we all follow recommended protocols - being as physically spread out as possible in all settings, restricting gatherings to small groups outside, wearing masks in all community spaces - we will protect each other and ourselves. I believe in this community and our focus on supporting each other in this moment.

Be well and I hope to see you soon,

President Lynn Morton





## 2. Community Commitment: For All Students and Employees

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### *Community Commitment: Owl In This Together*

I pledge that as a member of the Warren Wilson Community, I will do my best to protect others and myself by consistently following the “Three W’s”, reporting any symptoms promptly and self-isolating until cleared by testing or a medical professional, avoiding large gatherings, and participating in contact tracing efforts.

#### The Three Ws:

WAIT: When waiting in a line, practice physical distancing and face in the same direction.

WASH: Wash your hands often and avoid touching your face. Use hand sanitizer.

WEAR: Wear a face covering when in public spaces or in proximity to other people.

Careful adherence to basic practices can be as effective as a moderately effective vaccine. Ignoring these basic practices makes it much more likely that a virus will spread.

## 3. Finding Updates and FAQs

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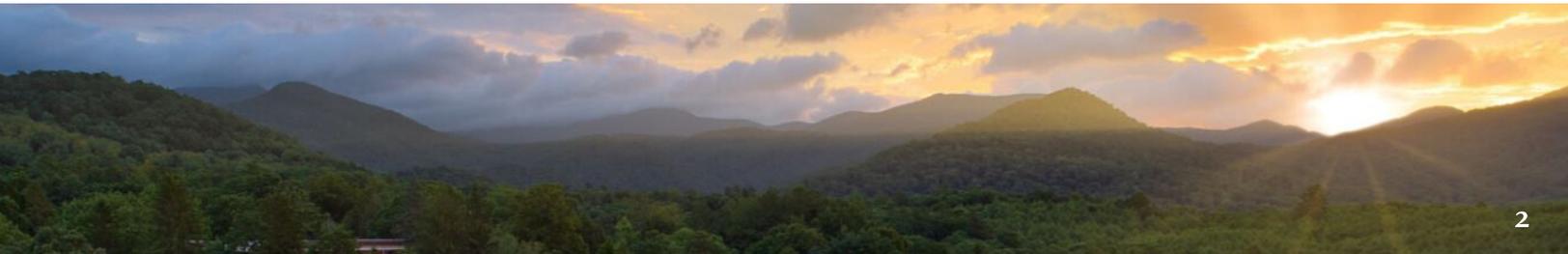
Please see [www.warren-wilson.edu/coronavirus](http://www.warren-wilson.edu/coronavirus) for the most updated information and FAQs as they emerge, with the first round of questions answered by July 10th. You can submit your questions in [this form](#).

## 4. Health and Wellness for Students and Employees

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### *Hygiene Practices*

The College will continue to provide daily cleaning and disinfecting of classrooms, breakrooms, bathrooms, and public spaces. Additionally, all members of the community should exercise caution and continue physical distancing and personal hygiene practices in order to protect from the spread of the coronavirus as per the guidelines below. All members of the community will be asked to monitor their own health daily.





## 4. Health and Wellness, continued

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- Students and employees should engage in frequent hand washing, the use of hand sanitizer, and sanitizing of surfaces regularly:
  - Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds as frequently as feasible.
  - Use hand sanitizer after interactions with people or objects if soap and water are not readily available.
- Cover coughs and sneezes into the sleeve or elbow, not hands.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Do not shake hands.

### *Physical Distancing on Campus*

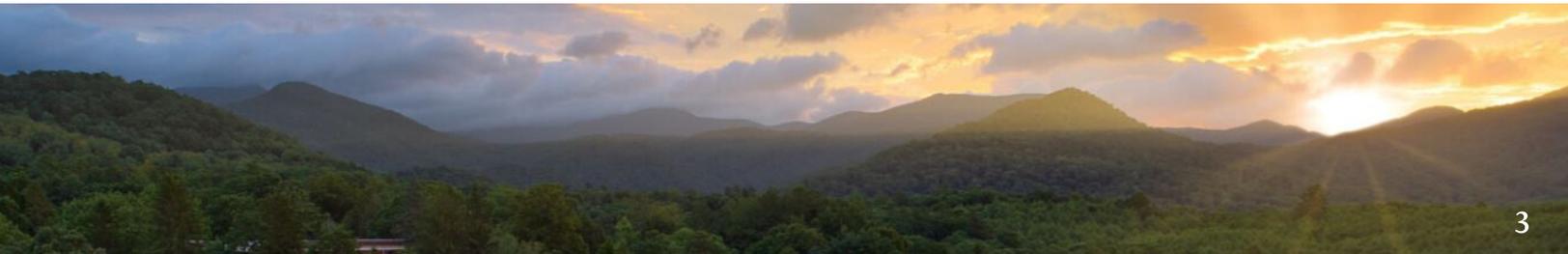
- Faculty and staff in individual offices should consider working with office doors shut.
- No events, meetings, or gatherings will be approved that include more people than what North Carolina law allows.
- The multi-person limit on gatherings includes other personnel that may be present in that space.
- Students and employees should remain mindful of physical distancing in small spaces including hallways, stairwells, and restrooms.
- Limit the number of people in meetings or other gatherings, ensuring that North Carolina law is followed. Examples include:
  - Video conferencing should be used instead of in-person meetings. If you have questions about how to utilize this technology, contact [helpdesk@warren-wilson.edu](mailto:helpdesk@warren-wilson.edu).
  - When in-person meetings are necessary, no more than the number of people defined in NC law by the Governor's order should be present, and physical distancing shall be in place.

### *Masks*

All students, faculty and staff on campus must wear a mask. Masks should be worn in public spaces and community members must wear them anytime they cannot maintain a safe physical distance from others. Masks must be worn by all faculty and students in classrooms, labs, and studios (including outdoor teaching spaces).

### *Temperature Checks*

All students and employees should check their temperature every morning. If you have an elevated temperature, please stay at home or in your residence hall and follow the proper protocols. See Section 5 below for these expectations for students and employees.





## 4. Health and Wellness, continued

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### *Contact Tracing*

Warren Wilson College will participate in contact tracing and will assist Buncombe County contact tracers in their effort to track any potential spread of the virus.

### *Cleaning*

Warren Wilson College has contracted to clean all buildings on campus. All areas of the College will be sanitized and disinfected with CDC approved cleaning products. Students and employees should also be prepared to maintain clean and sanitized personal living spaces and office spaces.

### *Flu Immunizations*

When available, flu shots are highly recommended. The College will work to provide access to the flu vaccine for our students and employees.

## 5. Expectations of Students and Employees with COVID-19 Symptoms or a Sick Family Member at Home with COVID-19

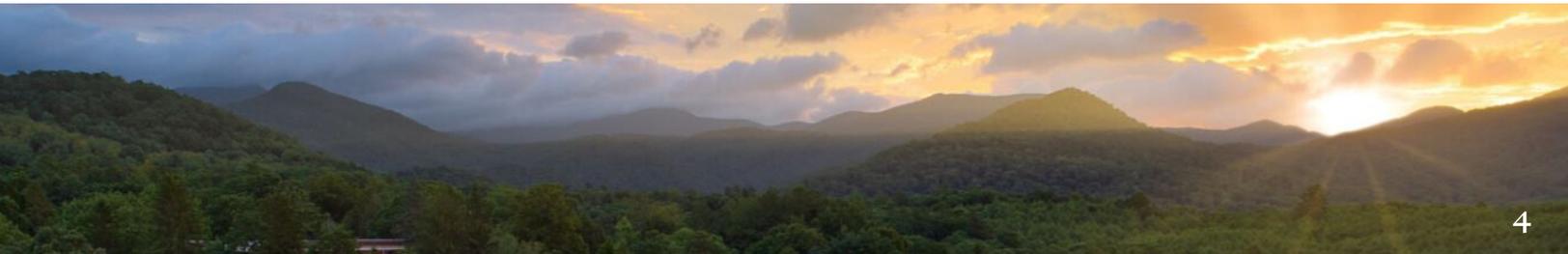
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Students and employees who have the following symptoms or live with a member of their household/residence with these symptoms, should stay at home or in their residence hall room and immediately notify the appropriate people (outlined below):

### *COVID-19 Symptoms*

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Nausea
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Runny nose or new sinus congestion
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Vomiting
- Sore throat
- Fatigue
- New gastrointestinal symptoms
- New loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea

More information about symptoms can be found at [www.cdc/coronavirus.gov](http://www.cdc/coronavirus.gov).





## 5. Expectations, continued

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The Warren Wilson Health Center will conduct initial screenings, after which students with relevant symptoms would be directed to a physician who would decide whether they qualify to be tested.

Employees should notify their supervisor, contact their healthcare provider, and stay home. Employees with confirmed cases of COVID-19 should follow their physician's recommended steps and contact Human Resources to discuss available options.

Students and employees are highly encouraged to utilize the Buncombe County COVID-19 Self Checker which is intended to be a quick, confidential, easy-to-use assessment tool the community can use online or by phone to help determine if you may have COVID-19 and how you can proceed to get medical care.

We are working closely with the Buncombe County Health Department and local health care providers to provide testing and health safety protocols.

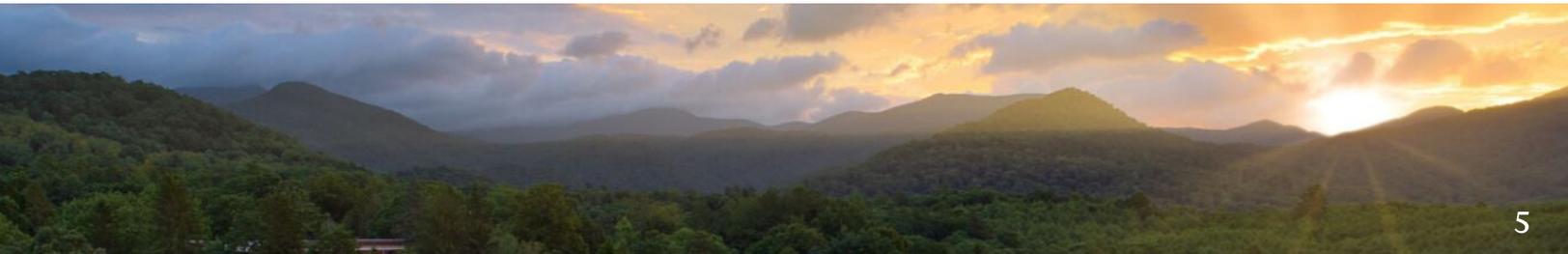
Check for testing options at [www.buncombeready.org](http://www.buncombeready.org).

Employees who are well but who have a family member at home sick with a confirmed case of COVID-19 should notify their supervisor, follow CDC recommended precautions, stay at home, and contact Human Resources to discuss available options.

## 6. Academics

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While physical distancing challenges us to teach and learn in ways that may look quite different than our usual routines, as a liberal arts college, we will apply our considerable creativity and teaching expertise to create effective learning experiences that combine in-person instruction with rich and relational remote interactions. We plan to teach our fall courses on campus—with masks and in classrooms configured for physical distancing. We will use a variety of new and previously used indoor teaching and learning spaces as well as take advantage of the College land to create more designated outdoor teaching spaces. We will also augment classroom, lab, and other learning spaces with technology, where appropriate, to enable flexible learning.





## 6. Academics, continued

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### *Flexible Learning*

The faculty are designing their courses with both structure and flexibility in order to adapt to student and community circumstances while continuing to create the individualized learning and personal connections that are the hallmark of our teaching at the College. This flexibility includes hybrid course designs that will blend in-person and remote learning in order to reduce the numbers of students present at one time in any classroom, lab, or studio—while staying connected and learning together.

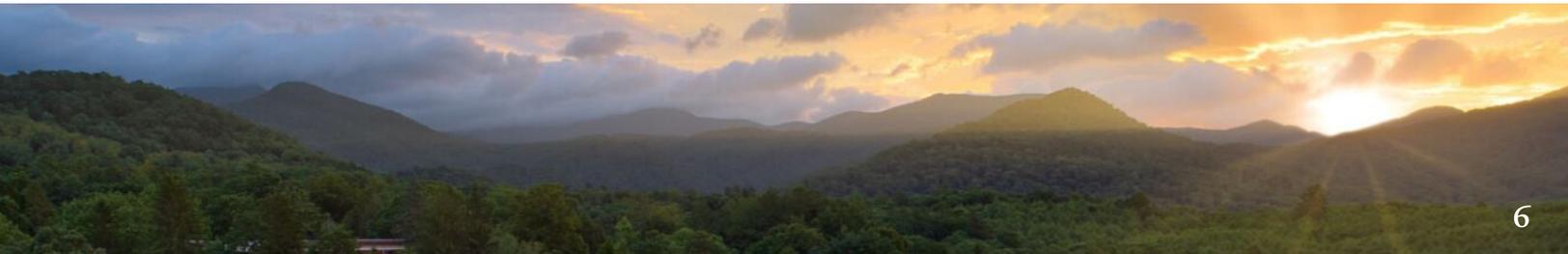
When a student or faculty member is unable to attend class due to symptoms or a need to go into isolation, they will be able to continue with the course remotely.

At Warren Wilson, we take education to be, as bell hooks affirms, "the practice of freedom." This orientation is even more central in a world of pandemic and inequity. Regardless of how we'll meet—in masks, at a distance, remotely—we'll create those "participatory spaces for the sharing of knowledge" that hooks commends (hooks, 1994). We'll engage, as always, in the kind of mutual, collaborative, and constructive learning that calls on our scrappy creativity and invites our individual experiences to address questions that are bigger than ourselves. We'll continue to build and maintain the relationships and mentoring that are the core of learning at Warren Wilson.

Typically, faculty will use digital tools to facilitate rich interactions outside of class (between faculty and students and among students as peers). Such designs also prepare students to make the most meaningful use of time in class for questioning, problem-solving, and other sorts of engaged learning, including our many options to use outdoor spaces for such meetings. To allow for lower densities in class, cohorts of students may alternate their in-class days. To allow for students who will be remote for any reason, courses will include robust, structured, and engaging outside-of-class projects—all with regular feedback from faculty.

### *Criteria for Online Only Enrollment*

As a general principle, the Warren Wilson educational experience is not an online experience. When the global pandemic hit, our faculty and staff worked hard to pivot with creativity and flexibility to maintain instruction and learning remotely. As we prepare for the fall reopening, we expect that most students will want to return to campus to learn in-person with physical distancing and COVID-19 health protocols in place. Still, we also know that, for some students and faculty, returning to campus this fall will not be possible.





## 6. Academics, continued

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There are two basic criteria for students who wish to complete the semester entirely online: a documented learning or health accommodation, or a logistical concern that precludes a student from attending in-person.

Students who have mental health or physical health issues that would prohibit them from accessing the regular classroom environment will have the option of taking some or all of their courses online. Students should request and coordinate these accommodations with Deborah Braden, Director of Disability Access, in the Center for Integrated Advising and Careers at [dbraden@warren-wilson.edu](mailto:dbraden@warren-wilson.edu).

Students, such as some international students, who have a logistical challenge or concern that precludes them from being on-campus, may also request an exception to complete the semester entirely online. Academic Affairs is working on an exemption process and form (non-accommodation related) and we will have more information about that process by mid-July.

### *Academic Calendar*

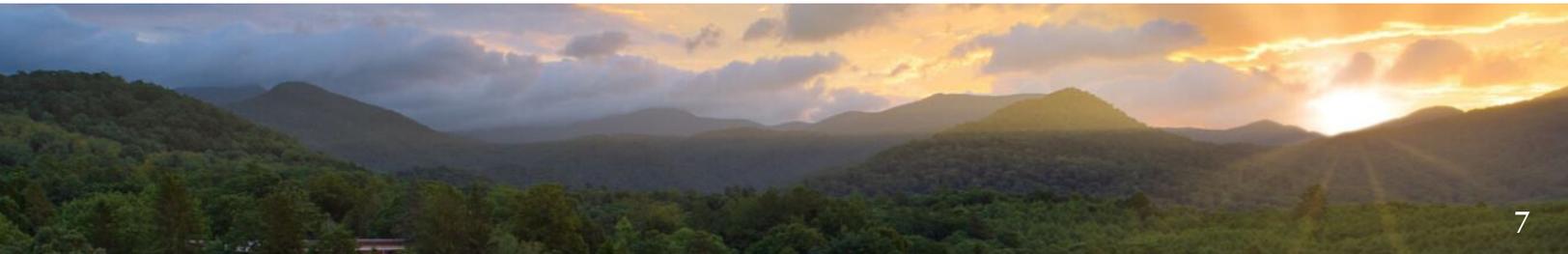
Warren Wilson established a new [academic calendar](#) for the fall 2020 semester. Classes begin August 17th, 2020 and on-campus instruction ends at Thanksgiving. Final exams will be conducted remotely after the Thanksgiving holiday. The spring semester calendar will remain the same as previously published. We will continually assess the calendar based on developments and events regionally and nationally.

### *Classroom Policies and Setup*

Masks must be worn by all faculty and students in classrooms, labs, and studios (including outdoor teaching spaces).

Classrooms will be configured to promote physical distancing. Room-specific plans will be developed for every classroom and instructional space, including labs, studios and rehearsal spaces. All students and faculty are expected to maintain the established layout of furnishings in each class.

Specific classroom and building guidelines and procedures will be communicated closer to the start of the semester.





## 6. Academics, continued

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### *Study Away*

All study away for the fall semester has been cancelled (unless a special exemption is granted on a per-student, per-location basis). Faculty-led courses in the fall are still under review and a decision will be made about those courses by August 1st. As of now, semester study away will resume for the spring semester (this is, however, subject to change based on health and safety indicators).

### *Inbound International Students*

Any new and returning F-1 international students will be welcomed to campus this fall as long as it is possible to purchase flights from their home country into the US and obtain the appropriate visa in time for the first day of classes on August 17th, 2020. For those who cannot physically return to campus, an online learning format will be available.

All programming for inbound international exchange students has been cancelled for the fall semester. As of now, inbound exchange students will be allowed to defer and attend Warren Wilson for the spring semester (this is, however, subject to change based on health and safety indicators).

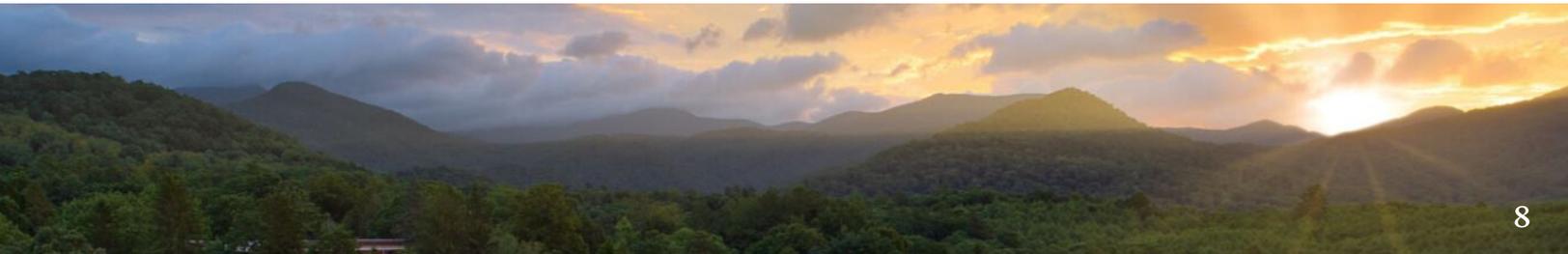
### *Graduate Students*

Summer and fall residencies for our graduate programs will take place online. Semester schedules are otherwise unchanged. Decisions about spring and summer 2021 residencies will be made at a later date. In the event in-person residencies will not be possible, online and remote options will continue. More specific information about schedules will come through the Program Director offices when available.

## 7. Work Program

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The Work Program will be fully implemented in the fall. Students will receive a confirmation of crew assignment and selected contract hours for the semester. Work may include both in-person and remote tasks and projects depending on the focus of the crew. Some common educational components will also be part of participation in the Work Program. These will include some mandatory and some optional sessions focused on topics related to career development, cultural competency, self-reflection and, in some cases, crew-specific skills. Crew meetings and professional development sessions will also be conducted in both online and in-person formats. All protocols must be followed while participating in the Work Program.





## 8. Community Engagement

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We are called to engage in the community more than ever, even as we experience the public health need for physical distancing. With this in mind, we will offer opportunities for students to engage with local and regional community partners around issues of social and environmental justice. We will coordinate in-person activities when possible, will identify and develop remote opportunities, and will support students in their work within their own local communities. Academic service-learning will be supplemented with online resources that will bring the voices of our community partners into the classroom. All protocols must be followed when in contact with other people in community engagement activities.

## 9. Student Life

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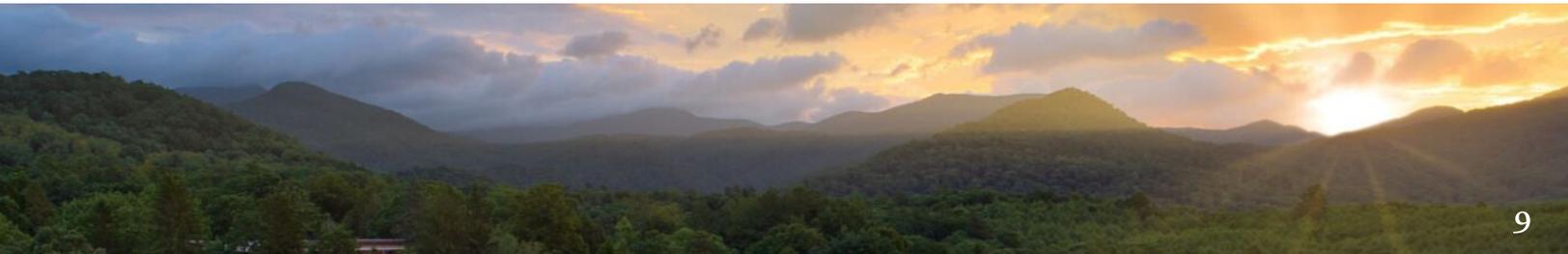
### *Residence Life*

Providing students with a healthy and positive living and learning environment is a top priority for being able to resume on-campus activities. Our staff is currently in the process of determining strategies and procedures to reopen as safely as possible. Returning to residence hall spaces includes implementing physical distancing throughout common areas and kitchens, enhancing cleaning protocols, investigating room configuration options, and educating students.

### *What will move-in look like?*

Following best practice recommendations, all arrivals to campus will be staggered, and move-in will take place over a series of days to minimize the number of students and families arriving at one time. Move-in dates and times will be selected and assigned later this summer and will be based on your floor and residence hall. When you arrive on campus, there will be an initial symptom screening and temperature check before you will be allowed to move in. Returning students will be asked to complete a form regarding their preferred move in date and time.

For new student move-in, we request that you bring only your single closest family member to campus who can help you with moving items. In order to keep the number of people going in and out of our residence halls low, we are unable to allow several family members for each new student and hope you understand our commitment to physical distancing.





## 9. Student Life, continued

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### *What should I do prior to returning to campus?*

Please begin to monitor your health prior to returning. You should be vigilant to adhere to physical distancing in the weeks leading up to your move-in. Before leaving to return to campus, complete a symptom checker and check your temperature. If you have any symptoms of flu-like illness, please check with your health provider to see if you should be tested for COVID-19 before returning to campus, and inform Student Life at [studentlife@warren-wilson.edu](mailto:studentlife@warren-wilson.edu).

We will be doing campus check-in differently this year to minimize contact. Prior to leaving your home, you will need to ensure you are financially clear and approved to arrive on campus. Remember to accept your financial aid and check your balance online. Students whose accounts are not clear will be required to set up virtual appointments with the appropriate campus offices to clear your account prior to arrival.

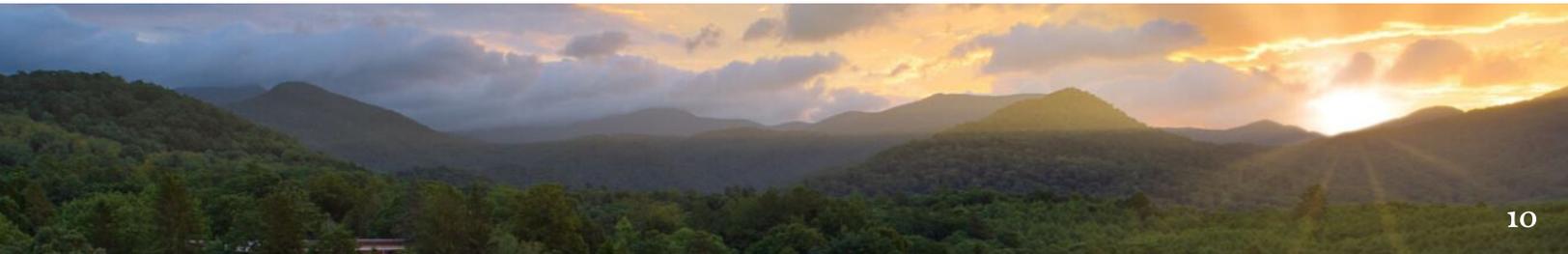
### *What should I bring?*

When you return to campus, we are asking students to bring items that will assist you in monitoring your health and keeping you safe.

- We are requiring all students to return to campus with at least one reusable mask (more would be better). We have ordered a supply of cloth masks should you need one.
- You should bring a reusable thermometer for your personal use, preferably one that measures your core body temperature.
- Please bring your own supply of hand sanitizer. Hand sanitizer will be available in buildings across campus, but you should carry your own at all times.
- In addition to any regular medications you would normally bring to campus at the start of the semester, please bring a personal supply of medications that you can use to manage symptoms if you do get sick, such as a fever reducer.
- Please bring supplies to clean and disinfect your personal living space, especially if you are living in a residence hall where you and your roommates are responsible for cleaning your own bathroom.
- Bring tech supplies to access online classes, work and programming.

### *Will I have a roommate?*

If you are a returning student and selected a roommate during room selection, you will have the room and roommate(s) you selected. New students will also be assigned roommates.





## 9. Student Life, continued

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We will have a limited number of singles available for request through the Housing and Residence Life Office's normal room selection process, including requests made for medical reasons. The availability of singles is limited. Residence Life and Housing also has a [change of housing status form](#) that students can use to request permission to live off campus and commute to campus. In addition to the already established criteria for living off campus as stated in the Student Handbook, COVID-19 related reasons will now be considered in those requests.

### *Campus Life and Programming*

We will not be permitting large gatherings on campus, the size of which may be set by the local or state health department. We will also work to minimize the size of campus gatherings for programs. Many meetings and programs will take place online.

### *Off-Campus Quarantine and Isolation Facility*

The College secured an off-campus facility for students who may be required to quarantine or self-isolate at the nearby YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly campus in Black Mountain. Students needing to utilize this facility will be given single, air-conditioned rooms with a private bathroom and WiFi. A support team will provide consistent health monitoring, case management, and meal deliveries.

### *Physical Distancing: Dining, Transportation, and Other Locations*

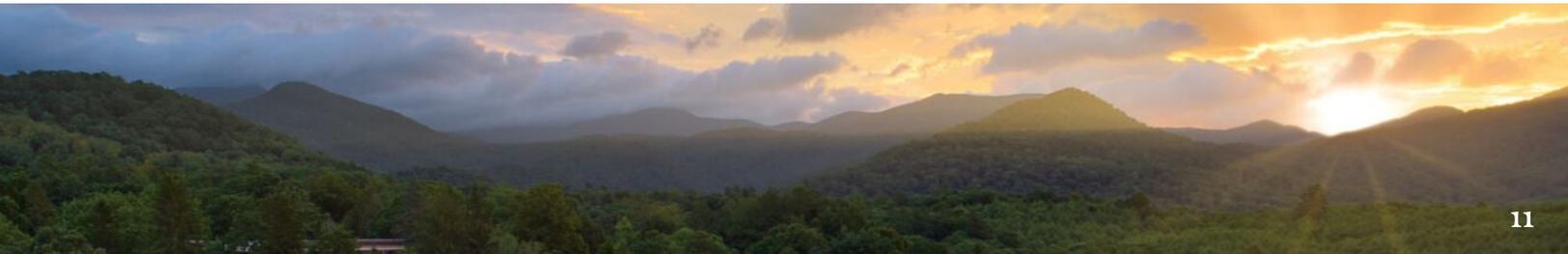
Many spaces on campus will have revised foot traffic patterns. This includes the dining hall. Our ability to provide transportation will be impacted in the fall and may be restricted to essential trips only. Because of physical distancing and changing room capacities, many of your classes and work crew meetings will be a combination of in-person and remote instruction.

## 10. Billing

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### *Payment*

- Fall 2020 semester charges are ready to view and pay on [MyWWC](#).
- Payment (or payment plan) must be in place by July 15th.
- If you intend to set up a monthly payment plan, the first installment is due to TMS/Nelnet July 1st.
- Visit MyWWC for additional [Payment Options](#).





## 10. Billing, continued

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### Monthly Payment Plan Information

- Payment plans must be in place and in good standing by the payment due date.
- Payment may be made in monthly installments by arranging a contractual agreement with Nelnet; online at <https://warren-wilson.afford.com/Home> or by calling (888) 722-4867.
- Fall Plan: July-October (4-month) / July-November (5-month).
- Payments are due on the first of the month.
- Plans are approved upon payment of the first month(s) installment and enrollment fee.
- Enrollment fees are \$52 per semester.
- After your plan is approved, the full amount of your Fall Nelnet payment plan will be applied to your Student Account as a credit. You will see it listed as "Payment Plan Contract (Nelnet)". If that has been applied to your account and there is still a balance due, then the payment plan is not enough to cover the bill. You can log into your Nelnet account and increase the amount of your payment plan, or pay the difference on [MyWWC](#).

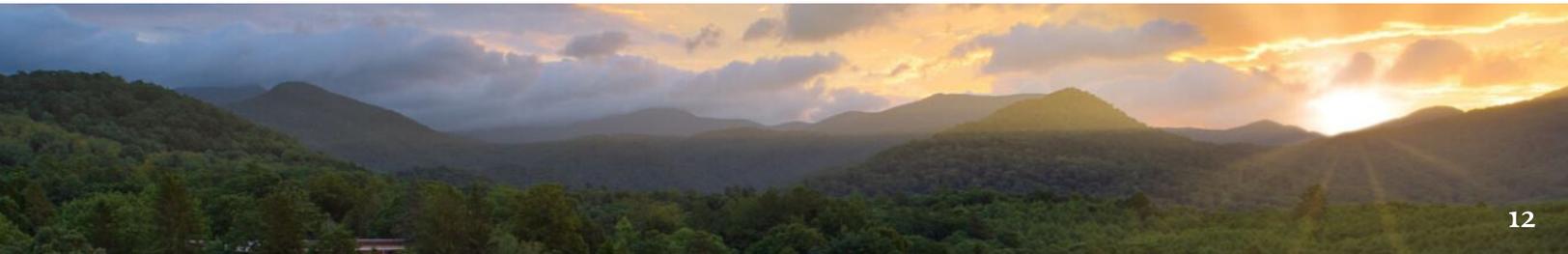
## 11. Athletics

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WWC Athletics intends to open this fall with modified policies and services. The operational decisions and safety measures implemented will focus on providing a healthy environment for everyone involved in the health and safety of our student-athletes and community members. Recognizing the nature of the current pandemic, the plan being developed represents a structure that will be in conjunction with college, local, state, and national policies and mandates.

In preparation for returning to campus and the resumption of intercollegiate athletics, Warren Wilson Athletics is working with a myriad of partners including, but not limited to, Warren Wilson College, the NCAA, the City of Asheville and Buncombe County, the State of North Carolina, other local colleges and universities, and local invested medical professionals.

The Athletics Department is in the process of finalizing an operation plan to conduct team activities including meetings, strength and conditioning, practices, and competition on a modified schedule in accordance with the guidelines issued by the NCAA. WWC Athletics will closely monitor local, state, and national developments and update our standards and safety protocols, as needed. The well-being of all Owl student-athletes, coaches, athletics staff, and members will always be the top priority.





## 11. Athletics, continued

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Athletic coaches and staff will participate in educational training regarding new health, safety, and building protocols. All athletic employees will be expected to wear a mask, wash hands frequently, physically distance, use proper cough and sneeze etiquette, not touch their faces, and will stay home if they begin to feel ill and seek proper care. Athletic staff, coaches, and student-athletes will participate in a screening prior to all official athletic activities.

DeVries athletic facilities will not open to the campus community until gyms are permitted to open within the local, state, and federal guidelines. Once the College is permitted to open athletic facilities, a phased-in approach will be implemented.

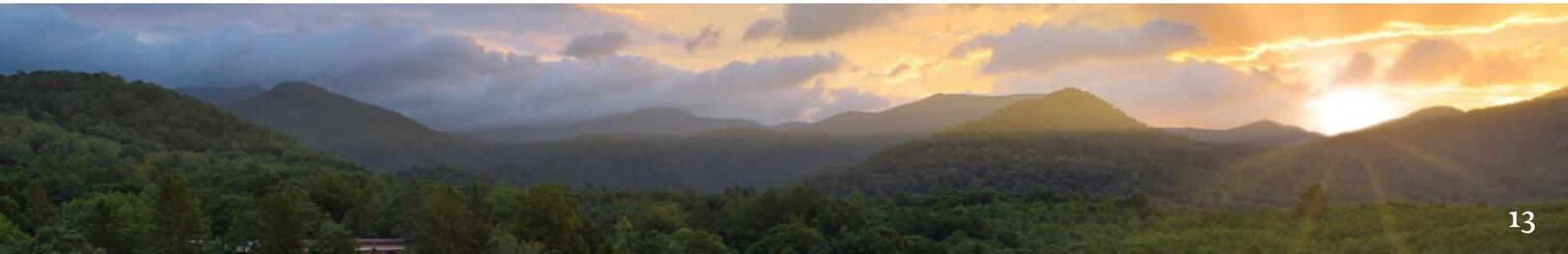
Warren Wilson College Athletic operations are subject to change pending new scientific evidence, legislation, or updates as our experience with COVID-19 changes.

## 12. Employee Workspaces and Schedules

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Cabinet members will work with supervisors and department chairs to evaluate workspaces and ensure any necessary changes and adjustments to adhere to physical distancing practices. In shared offices or workspaces, the following should be considered:

- Utilize flexible work schedules, staggered work hours, and staggered arrival and departure times.
- Create schedules that rotate employees between in-person and remote workdays to ensure offices are covered while also supporting physical distancing and decreasing office congestion.
- Stagger employees' arrival and departure times, so that not all employees arrive or depart at the same time.
- Alternate work and lunch schedules to minimize the number of individuals working together or congregating in one area.
- Consider your office layout to allow for physical distancing, for example:
  - Move desks or furniture apart to maximize spacing within offices.
  - Relocate individuals to alternate spaces or use larger spaces if possible.
  - Alter or limit congregating factors or spaces where the virus could be easily spread.
  - If you need assistance, please notify Facilities by completing a work order via normal processing procedures.
- Faculty and staff should have no visitors on campus unless approved by their Cabinet member in advance.





### 13. WWC Friends, Neighbors, and Alumni

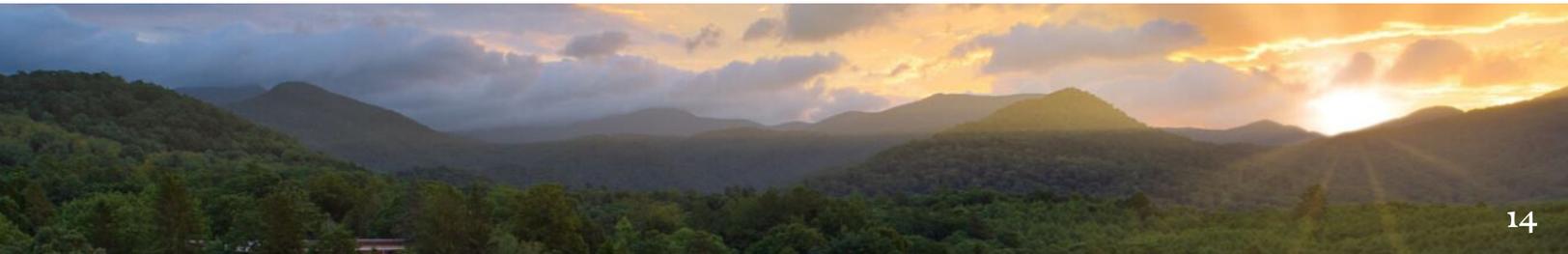
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The CDC guidelines for higher education suggest that colleges consider postponing non-critical gatherings in the fall and suggest restricting connections between students and external community members. Therefore, unless granted a specific exception or permission, there will be no gatherings of visitors until January 2021 at the earliest. Homecoming, Family Weekend, and guest lectures are cancelled for the fall semester. The trails will continue to be closed to non-campus community members as well until further notice.

### 14. WWC Prospective Students

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As Warren Wilson College continues to closely monitor the pandemic as well as guidance from local, state, and national health organizations, we recognize that experiencing a college campus and community firsthand is integral to the decision-making of our prospective students. To that end, the Office of Admissions will offer virtual information sessions and in-person campus tours for prospective students to explore our programming, applied learning model, and home in the Swannanoa Valley. Beginning in September, campus tours will depart from the Admissions Office at Orr Cottage and will be primarily outdoors, while practicing physical distancing. Ahead of campus tours resuming, additional information, including FAQs and protocols for visiting families, will be available at [www.warren-wilson.edu/visit](http://www.warren-wilson.edu/visit).





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