

Meredith students, faculty and staff,

The Executive Leadership and [Incident Response Teams](#) and the academic planning sub groups have made progress on [Fall 2020 plans](#) in the week and a half since our last update to you on June 3. All of our plans continue to be based on the latest guidance and directives from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the State of North Carolina and are developed with the health and safety of our community as the highest priority.

Calendar Changes

In our June 3 update, we let you know that changes to the academic calendar for 2020-21 were under consideration. On Friday, June 12, the decision was made to officially modify the academic calendar.

Fall classes will begin on Monday, August 17, which is two days earlier than originally planned. Monday, September 7 (Labor Day), will also be an instructional day. Fall Break is being moved to Tuesday, October 6, as a single day event. On-campus classroom activities will end no later than noon on Wednesday, November 25, the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. Virtual academic activities will be scheduled from Monday, November 30 - Tuesday, December 9, 2020. Academic leaders are still determining whether exams will be held prior to or after Thanksgiving. Once these decisions are finalized, the amended academic and exam calendars will be posted on the Registrar's Office website.

Holiday Calendar

Changes to the Academic Calendar affect the staff holiday calendar for Labor Day, Monday, September 7, with some offices needing to remain open with limited coverage. Staff should check with their supervisors about the requirements for individual offices and departments. Any staff who are required to work on Labor Day will receive an additional personal day to take prior to December 31, 2020.

Academic Flexibility

The Office of the Provost is working with academic deans, department heads and faculty to coordinate a well thought out mix of on-line asynchronous, synchronous, hybrid, and face-to-face classes for Fall 2020. Students will have the ability to take all classes remotely if they wish to do so. The goal is to maintain a high quality academic experience while offering maximum flexibility for the faculty and students. Deans and departments are working as quickly as they can to publish the mode of instruction for each class in WebAdvisor.

Safety

Meredith is taking a number of precautions to ensure the safest possible teaching, learning and working environment this year. Out of consideration for everyone in our community, all students and employees are required to wear masks or face coverings in classrooms, common areas, going to and from the dining room, and wherever social distancing is not possible. Exceptions are made for individuals with health reasons, for faculty while teaching (see below) or for pedagogical considerations. Individuals with health issues that prevent masks from being worn, should coordinate in advance with Human Resources if you are an employee or with Health Services if you are a student.

With our plans to have face-to-face classes remaining an important part of our educational offerings this year, these safety measures are being extended to the classroom. Attention is being given to matching classes to classroom spaces that allow for physical distancing. We have begun the process of installing plexiglass shields in high traffic, customer service locations across campus. We are also investigating plexiglass shields to provide an extra measure of protection where needed in classrooms. Additional hand sanitizing stations will be available in classroom buildings.

Next Update

We understand that you may still have a lot of questions about what the fall will look like at Meredith. Over the coming weeks, we will continue to provide regular updates related to instruction, enhanced safety and sanitation practices, housing options, on campus services, and events for the Fall 2020 semester.

We will also communicate updates made to our [Community Standards](#). Please continue to check your Meredith email, the [Meredith website](#), and social media to receive the latest information about the 2020-21 academic year.

Stay Strong,

Jo Allen, '80 and the Executive Leadership Team

sent 6/15/20
4:07 p.m.