

An earlier version of this message was emailed to students on 6/29/21. Because of a technical issue, not all students received the message. The message below includes some clarifications to the original message. PLEASE READ this message in its entirety even if you received the original email.

Dear Meredith Students—

We are looking forward to a great year with you at Meredith—one that looks and feels far more normal than the last 16 months!

Many of you have questions about vaccinations for COVID-19. This message is intended to give you some answers based on current information about this continually evolving public health issue.

We continue to watch data on cases (including variants) and the steps scientifically proven to make a difference. The steps we are adopting reflect that evidence.

In accordance with CDC and NCDHHS guidance, Meredith will continue to strongly encourage all students, faculty, and staff to get the COVID-19 vaccinations of their choice. We also reserve the right to require vaccinations, following full FDA approvals, if campus or local conditions warrant stronger action.

In light of those health organizations' research-based advice, we know that choosing vaccination is the surest way our community can return to normal activities and interactions. Vaccinations are free, and many of our community have already chosen to become vaccinated. We are lucky that just over 70% of adults in Wake County are now fully or partially vaccinated, and we are seeing life beginning to normalize throughout the county. We want that for Meredith College too.

We will open a private portal for students, faculty, and staff to report their vaccination status, beginning in mid-July. We will let you know by email when the portal opens. We will ask that you report your vaccination status by July 30 to help us make final plans regarding class space, activities, social distancing, mask-wearing, and other means of encouraging safety.

If we move to require vaccinations in the future, there will be options for medical and religious exemptions, but those are not necessary now for those who are not vaccinated.

Those who are not vaccinated will need to follow the same protocols that were in place prior to the availability of vaccines: follow community standards, participate in routine testing throughout the semester, and quarantine if showing symptoms or exposed to someone with COVID-19. Currently, Wake County still has free testing sites throughout the area. Unfortunately, we do not know how long those sites may be open. In addition, we will make free tests available from the state if our requests for those are approved. For some students, insurance may also cover the costs of testing. As a guide for understanding the pricing scenario, tests at \$75-100+ mean students who would have to

pay out of pocket could potentially pay up to \$1,500 per student over the course of a semester.

Fortunately, we have identified donors and other sources of funding to offset these costs for students, particularly those who have financial need. Students should apply for extended financial aid if they need help paying for COVID-related expenses, including testing.

Meredith College puts the health and safety of our students and employees above all else. We want you to have a healthy, vibrant community in which to live, learn, and thrive. If you want to talk about your decision with a healthcare expert, please contact your primary care provider.

For more information, visit <https://www.meredith.edu/staying-strong/vaccine-information/>.

With best wishes for a happy summer prior to the beginning of the fall semester,

The Executive Leadership Team and The Incident Response Team