



FALL 2020 WASHBURN TECH ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE (posted 7.17.2020)

Dear Ichabods,

We are excited to welcome you back to Washburn this fall. Washburn Tech is dedicated to ensuring you can continue your educational journey and achieve your goals for earning your degree while creating a safe and healthy environment on our campus. Our instructors and staff have diligently planned and prepared for the upcoming semester and now it is time to share information with you about the academic experience for our students in Fall 2020. **Please know that due to the evolving nature of the pandemic, we are ready to adapt the following plans as appropriate to new developments as they arise.** We recognize that Governor Kelly's July 15 announcement of a delayed start for Kansas K-12 schools will likely affect the lives of many in the Washburn community and we are currently considering those impacts.

Due to COVID-19, there are necessary adaptations and new rules required for all of us that will change our day-to-day interactions. At this time, we are planning to institute a combination of safety protocols, flexible instructional design, and changes to our academic calendar—all outlined below—to create a safe and healthy environment at Washburn.

Key Elements of the Fall 2020 Return to Campus Plans

Face masks: Face coverings help slow the spread of COVID-19 and every Washburn student will be issued a face mask this fall. In alignment with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance and Shawnee County health orders, Washburn has instituted the policy that face masks or cloth face coverings are required in all indoor public spaces on campus, including the classroom—therefore, only staff and students wearing face masks or cloth face coverings will be allowed to be in classrooms on the Washburn and Washburn Tech campuses. Those students who are unable to wear a mask for medical reasons should contact the Campus Advocate in the Student Services Office to arrange for accommodations by distance learning.

Social distancing: Limiting close contact with others reduces the spread of COVID-19. Throughout the Washburn campuses, we are reconfiguring spaces to maximize social distance and posting directional guidance in buildings to ensure a smooth flow of foot traffic. To help limit the density of students in classrooms, we are taking measures assure social distancing between students and instructors can be maintained between each person in the room. A minimum of 6 feet distancing will be maintained at all times on campuses. Additionally, courses may be moved to different classrooms or different buildings to better accommodate the number of students enrolled.

Modes of instruction: We are adapting the delivery format for some programs for the fall. In some cases, this means adapting courses within a program to meeting on campus two or three days per week and then meeting the other two instructional days as a remote course. Our plan is to maximize your hands-on learning time when you are on campus, and provide the supporting foundational instruction to you via online. All of this is being done to ensure safer social distancing while in the classrooms, shops and labs. Note that these modes of instruction are subject to change based on developing circumstances.

In some instances, this fall, a student's class will meet entirely in-person on the physical campus. We will be sending you a class schedule in early August to let you know how your fall classes are slated to meet.

While this approach maximizes social distancing and accessibility, we recognize that it also presents new complexities for the Washburn community; we are confident we can meet these challenges and we are committed to making the educational experience as smooth and seamless as possible for our students.

At this time, each of you should review your class schedule and consult with your Program Navigator/Advisor(s) or the Student Services Office about any adjustments you would like to make.

Adjustment to academic calendar: In some cases we may need to make changes to the academic calendar as result of the COVID-19 virus. Any changes will be communicated as quickly as possible. ***Please note that any changes to the Washburn Tech academic calendar do not apply to The Washburn University Campus or the Washburn School of Law.***

Technology: We recognize that these new approaches to instruction rely on technology to be successful and we are equipping all of our classrooms with the technology necessary to allow students to continue their learning from any location. Students without the computer or internet equipment necessary to be successful in their courses should contact Washburn Tech's IT Support, at 785.670.3000 or contact Washburn Tech's manager of user and network operations at derek.kucharczyk@washburn.edu.

These plans were crafted by Washburn's Academic Scenario Planning team, in collaboration with the university's COVID-19 Steering Committee, and in consultation with academic leaders from across Washburn University and Washburn Tech. The safety and well-being of all Ichabods is our highest priority and these plans draw upon the best health and safety guidance available, including that of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and directives from the State of Kansas and Shawnee County—for that reason, these plans are subject to change as new information becomes available.

Please note this message is just one of a number of messages you will receive in the coming weeks about the Fall 2020 semester. Please monitor your email closely for new messages, consult Washburn Tech's Coronavirus Information page regularly, and watch for information shared by your specific program and department. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to reach out via email to your advisor, program director, department chair, or dean. We are committed to answering your questions and making sure you have information you need as you plan for your Fall 2020 semester.

We look forward to the weeks ahead for the start of the semester, but there is no doubt that this fall semester will differ significantly from any other. Every member of our community will play an important role in adapting their own behavior to help ensure the health of others, accepting the necessity of some inconveniences, forgoing some activities, and demonstrating flexibility and resilience as we adapt should conditions change. It will be challenging, but I heartily believe that not only is each of us is capable of making these changes, we are committed to each other and to living out Washburn's motto *Non Nobis Solum*—***Not For Ourselves Alone***.

Sincerely,

JuliAnn Mazachek

JuliAnn Mazachek, Ph.D. | Vice President for Academic Affairs
Office of Academic Affairs | Washburn University
Bradbury Thompson Alumni Center, Suite 200
1700 SW College Ave | Topeka, Kansas 66621