

June 10, 2020

Dear Iowa State Community,

Today I want to share with you some important decisions about the fall semester at ISU. These points represent the first broad strokes of an emerging blueprint to maintain our good health and the academic excellence of ISU, based on the work of a dozen dedicated teams working cooperatively across campus.

Here are our key decisions to date about the fall semester. We encourage anyone with questions to email COVID-19@iastate.edu.

Fall classes will begin Monday, August 17. We received approval from the Board of Regents to change our start and end dates for the fall semester. The semester will begin on Monday, August 17, a week earlier than planned. Classes will be held on Labor Day, September 7.

Fall classes will end Wednesday, November 25. We will end the semester, including final exams, on Wednesday, November 25, the day before Thanksgiving. This schedule provides us with the best opportunity to complete the fall semester safely and successfully on campus, while maximizing in-person instruction, maintaining experiential learning goals, and completing final exams onsite.

Reconfiguring classrooms and delivery of courses. This semester we will reduce the number of students in a classroom at one time. We expect students and their professors to wear face coverings. We will modify time between classes to avoid congestion in buildings, walkways, buses and other areas.

Many classes will be offered in multiple delivery options — in-person, online or a hybrid approach — to meet the needs of our students and instructional faculty. Our intent is for courses with labs, studio sections, capstone projects and other interactive experiences to largely be delivered through in-person instruction. We are making every effort to maximize in-person learning and the student learning experiences that are a defining characteristic of an Iowa State education.

Testing and contact tracing. Plans are under development for a COVID-19 testing program for students, faculty and staff. Our Thielen Student Health Center, working with other expertise on campus, will put in place enhanced contact tracing to help identify and resolve possible exposure. These efforts will be done in collaboration with our county and state public health partners.

Face coverings, hygiene and frequent cleaning. Although it will not be possible to mitigate every risk, every person must contribute to reducing those risks. Everyone will be strongly encouraged to show their care for our ISU community and the City of Ames by adhering to the advice, guidelines and best practices of health experts, including the Centers for Disease Control and other professional health organizations. Physical distancing and the wearing of face coverings when in class or shopping at stores, or when we're around others will be expected. Promoting personal hygiene practices and frequent cleaning will be part of every person's new normal as a citizen of our campus community.

Living safely in residence halls. The Department of Residence will offer single and double occupancy in our residence halls. Room assignments and move-in information will be sent in coming days. The move-in process will be spread out over a longer period of time to reduce congestion and allow for physical distancing. Designated spaces will be reserved in case our residence hall students need to self-isolate or quarantine during the semester.

More information to come. Again, these initial decisions for fall semester are not intended to answer all the questions for everyone's specific situation. We will continue to share updates as the planning process continues through email and the [COVID-19 Fall Planning page](#). Let me thank the team that made it possible for us to reach this important point — the Fall 2020 Planning Executive Committee led by Vice President for Extension and Outreach John Lawrence and our Academic Work Group led by Associate Provost Ann Marie VanDerZanden. Dr. Lawrence and Dr. VanDerZanden's teams have been addressing an extremely complex task with input from faculty, staff and students.

The Principles of Community. Thirteen years ago, Iowa State formally adopted the [Principles of Community](#) — Respect, Purpose, Cooperation, Richness of Diversity, Freedom from Discrimination, and Honest and Respectful Expression of Ideas. Developed by student leaders and endorsed campus-wide, these six ideals guide us in fostering a welcoming campus climate. We expect everyone at Iowa State to practice and uphold our principles for the good of the community.

Together, we create the ISU community experience. This fall I will mark my third year as president of this amazing university. From the beginning, I have let everyone know that I want Iowa State to be known as the best land-grant university in creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for students, faculty and staff, so every person can reach their full potential. That priority is not changing; it becomes even more important as we confront the depravity of racism and prejudice and mourn the tragic killing of George Floyd. I ask that you join me in rededicating ourselves to creating an ISU community of care, empathy, and positive change.

I look forward to welcoming you to Iowa State University this fall.

Wendy Wintersteen
President