Dear Campus Community,

Despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, the University of South Dakota has been able to continue offering a face-to-face classroom experience since fall of 2020. Students, faculty and staff made a collective commitment to #ProtectThePack, which has allowed our community to prioritize safety while living and learning together. By requiring face coverings, reimagining campus events, adjusting classroom setups to accommodate physical distancing, establishing resources and services for students in isolation, encouraging our community to practice safe behaviors and expanding testing opportunities, among other efforts, the university is prioritizing safety at its campus locations.

The USD COVID-19 Task Force, in collaboration with local officials and health care leaders, oversees university decisions pertaining to COVID-19. In summer of 2020, the USD COVID-19 Case Management plan was developed based on recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the South Dakota Department of Health to share the university’s plans for managing cases of COVID-19 on campus. The plan has since been updated to reflect new protocols and expectations at the university. The document remains flexible and may evolve in response to emerging research and new guidance from health authorities. The USD Case Management Team continues to manage active cases confidentially, and the COVID-19 Task Force meets regularly to assess university operations in light of COVID-19.

Our top priority remains ensuring the safety of our community while fulfilling our mission to serve our students and our state. We thank our faculty, staff and students for their continued efforts in wearing face coverings and physically distancing themselves. We recognize your meaningful contributions in keeping our campus community safe, and we ask that you continue to protect each other in the months ahead. Now, more than ever, we need to work together.

If you have any questions or feedback for the COVID-19 Task Force, you may reach out to COVID19@usd.edu. Thank you for your continued dedication to the health and safety of the university. As always, Go Yotes!

COVID-19 Task Force
COVID-19 CASE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The University of South Dakota remains committed to protecting the health and well-being of our community. The university continues to monitor the spread of COVID-19 and take action to increase safety at all campus sites. The following comprehensive Case Management Plan outlines USD’s strategy for making decisions about university protocols, facilitating testing opportunities, cooperating with South Dakota Department of Health (DOH) contact-tracing investigations, collaborating with health care professionals and communicating with the campus community.

For the most up-to-date COVID-19 information from USD, please visit usd.edu/covid19.

LEADERSHIP AND OFFICIAL GUIDANCE

In March of 2020, President Gestring designated a strategic task force to continuously monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and oversee decisions regarding university operations and protocols. The COVID-19 Task Force includes leaders representing a variety of sectors at the university, including the President’s Office, Academic Affairs, the USD Foundation, Student Services, Athletics, the Office for Diversity, Research & Sponsored Programs, the Sanford School of Medicine, Finance & Administration, Human Resources, and Enrollment, Marketing & University Relations. The task force regularly seeks input from the City of Vermillion, the Vermillion Chamber & Development Company and the USD Student Government Association to recognize and respond to the needs of the community and the student body.

USD also maintains close communication with the South Dakota Department of Health and local hospitals to develop mutually-beneficial partnerships, expand access to resources, execute accurate reporting and ensure that university decisions reflect guidance from state and local health care professionals.

Faculty, staff, students and community members are welcome to provide feedback on the university’s response to the pandemic; please contact the Student Government Association (SGA@coyotes.usd.edu), the Dean of Students (DeanofStudents@usd.edu) or the COVID-19 Task Force (COVID19@usd.edu) to share your thoughts and questions.

TESTING

Getting tested for COVID-19 is one of the best ways members of our community can protect one another.

Free COVID-19 testing for asymptomatic individuals is available to USD students, faculty and staff through the USD Sentinel Testing program. This drive-thru program, which is sponsored by the South Dakota Department of Health and administered through Sanford Vermillion, offers PCR naso-pharyngeal swab tests to asymptomatic individuals at no cost. Hours of operation can be found at usd.edu/covid19/testing-and-self-reporting.

Free at-home COVID-19 saliva test kits are available to South Dakota residents through the DOH and Vault Health, Inc. This option was also extended to eligible USD students in December of 2020. Students who would like to inquire about getting tested via this method should contact the COVID-19 Task Force at COVID19@usd.edu.

Students who are sick or have symptoms of COVID-19 should stay home, stay away from other people and contact Student Health at 605-677-3700.
In Vermillion, testing occurs at Sanford Vermillion Medical Clinic (SVMC). Samples are taken by SVMC and couriered to Sioux Falls, with results typically returned within 24 – 96 hours. Persons Under Investigation (PUI) are expected to self-isolate until results are back.

**Students who reside in locations other than USD’s home location of Vermillion (e.g. Community College for Sioux Falls) may still contact USD Student Health at (605) 677-3700 for recommendations about medical care options in various locations throughout South Dakota and its surrounding regions.**

**NOTIFICATION**

Any individuals identified by Student Health as testing positive for COVID-19 will be **confidentially** reported to the DOH in accordance with applicable law. DOH will initiate contact-tracing and will notify the USD Case Management Team. **We strongly encourage all students, staff and faculty who test positive to immediately fill out the USD COVID Self-Reporting Form.** USD has prepared a variety of services to assist you, and we want to do so as quickly as possible. Our top priorities are keeping you safe and protecting your privacy while also protecting our campus community from the potential spread of COVID-19.

Early response is a critical component of containment and mitigating risk to the USD community. Notifying the USD Case Management Team provides an opportunity to quickly identify potential risks to the health of university community members, and it allows for swift action to contain the spread and provide additional support if necessary, all while following strict confidentiality protocols.

**Students**

Students, particularly those living off campus who were not tested through USD Student Health, are likewise encouraged to self-disclose their quarantine or isolation status by filling out the **USD COVID Self-Reporting Form.**

**Employees**

As always, employees are required to notify their supervisor if they must miss work due to illness, or are asked to self-quarantine by the DOH, so that work schedules and leave can be determined. Employees should report all close contacts to DOH. Employees are asked to inform the USD Case Management Team of their recent work locations to assist the team in determining if there are any additional actions needed such as deep cleaning. Return to work dates will be determined by the supervisor, employee and Human Resources, based on guidance from the DOH. The USD Case Management Team follows strict confidentiality protocols to protect those exposed to COVID-19 while reducing the spread of COVID-19 to our on- and off-campus locations.

USD’s facilities management department and other units with contractors, tenants and vendors onsite will notify the USD Case Management Team at **COVID19@usd.edu** if they learn that individuals within the contractor/vendor population have tested positive for COVID-19, and provide information as necessary to help identify university groups that may be affected.

**CONTACT-TRACING & CASE MANAGEMENT**

In keeping with USD’s commitment to the safety and well-being of all community members, USD has established a Case Management Team to provide support to DOH contact-tracing efforts, provide service and streamline the process for those seeking support from the university across multiple areas. The Case Management Team will support all community members, inform monitoring and eliminate duplication of efforts for those in isolation or quarantine while following strict confidentiality protocols.

The DOH has extensive communicable disease investigation guidelines, including a contact-tracing program that will identify the highest-risk contacts of cases in the overall community. USD is in a unique position to partner with the DOH, providing support to contact-tracing efforts through the university Case Management Team, which will act as a liaison to gather additional information or provide assistance as requested. The Sanford School of Medicine has also partnered with the DOH to assist with contact-tracing efforts. Contact-tracing will be more complete if your phone is pre-equipped with a contact-tracing app. We ask all staff and students to download the **Care19 Diary app**, which can be downloaded in the Google Play or App Store. This app (which is completely confidential and not shared with anybody) will provide you with a reminder of where you have been over the past two weeks.
Case Management Team
The Case Management Team maintains the university case management system and coordinates on-campus quarantine, isolation and decontamination efforts. Professionals from USD’s Office of Environmental Health and Safety and USD Student Health serve as liaisons to the DOH. In addition, team members assist with outreach to students identified as contacts, as requested by the DOH, including coordinating medical evaluation for residential students through USD Student Health.

The team consists of representatives from the following university departments:
- Environmental Health and Safety
- Student Health (Sanford Vermillion)
- Dean of Students Office
- Human Resources
- Academic Affairs
- Sanford School of Medicine

Departments across campus supplement and support the efforts of the USD Case Management Team.

Students
Students who test positive for COVID-19 should inform the USD Case Management Team by filling out the USD COVID Self-Reporting Form. This team will work with the Office of the Dean of Students to provide ongoing support for personal, social and academic needs. If a student living on campus tests positive, the student will be placed in an isolation residence room until a trained medical professional provides either the student or the Case Management Team a documented release from quarantine. Students in isolation will receive regular health check calls from Student Health and the South Dakota DOH, and students also have a variety of support services and resources available to them.

Employees
All employees must adhere to the university’s public health procedures. Employees are asked to complete the USD Safe self-assessment prior to coming to work each day. Employees who do not feel well should stay home to minimize potential exposure of their colleagues and community members. Employees who are presenting COVID-19 symptoms at work should leave work immediately after notifying their supervisor via phone or email. Employees directed to self-isolate or quarantine will work with the DOH to determine return-to-work dates. Faculty and staff should contact Human Resources (hr@usd.edu) for assistance with leave benefits.

Supervisors
Supervisors will encourage employees who do not feel well to stay home. If an employee is presenting COVID-19 symptoms at work, they will be sent home and asked to contact their medical provider for screening and additional health guidance, which may include testing and self-isolation or symptom-monitoring and self-quarantine. Supervisors should also notify the Case Management Team if employees have tested positive for COVID-19. Supervisors should encourage faculty and staff to contact Human Resources to review leave benefits (hr@usd.edu). Supervisors will work with the employee and Human Resources on a return-to-work date. Return-to-work will depend on self-isolation or quarantine timelines, which are determined by DOH.

Contractors and Tenants
Contractors and tenants who develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19 are required to notify their project manager or other contact within the Facilities Management Department. The department will then notify the Case Management Team, and a representative will follow-up with the DOH or local health department for case-by-case guidance.

South Dakota Department of Health
The DOH has an extensive contact-tracing network and will initiate contact-tracing and follow-up calls with individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 and their close contacts. DOH will communicate with all contacts identified by cases. Contacts will be referred for testing as recommended. DOH will work with employees and supervisors on return-to-work dates and release from quarantine. DOH will contact the Case Management Team for additional information should it be needed, and partner with USD Student Health to assess student exposures.
DAILY HEALTH SELF-ASSESSMENT
As part of efforts to mitigate the spread of illness in the community, employees and students coming to campus for classes, to conduct research, to work, or for other engagement activities are asked to complete the confidential USD Safe daily health self-assessment prior to coming to campus each day. The information you provide in the app will not be shared with any entity. The USD Safe app can be downloaded from the Apple and Google stores.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES
As part of efforts to mitigate the spread of illness in the community while maintaining our missions education, service and research, the USD COVID-19 Case Management Team has prepared the following support services for those students who test positive for COVID-19, and for those contacts required to remain in quarantine.

- Isolation rooms have been set aside for residential students who test positive.
- Arrangements have been made to provide meals to those in isolation rooms.
- Instructors will provide opportunities, to the greatest extent possible, for students in isolation to continue their education remotely.
- Arrangements will be made to remain in regular contact with isolated students, both to assess their health and to provide additional support as may be necessary.
- Grocery delivery services are available to students in quarantine or isolation; students in need of these services should send an email to DeanofStudents@usd.edu so USD staff can coordinate delivery once the online order has been placed.

EMPLOYEE SUPPORT SERVICES
- Faculty concerned about teaching face-to-face classes should contact Academic Affairs at acadaffairs@usd.edu
- Employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home will also be supported by the Case Management Team.

VACCINES
The South Dakota Department of Health – in collaboration with local health care systems – is overseeing the state’s COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan, and USD will support those efforts as needed. Please visit the DOH website for additional details, and consult USD’s Vaccine Distribution webpage for resources and updates from the university.

COMMUNICATION
USD continually updates the usd.edu/COVID19 website to reflect current recommendations and protocols. The COVID-19 Case Management Dashboard presents statistics shared by the DOH and gathered through self-reporting in our campus community. There may be instances when the university does not know about new positive cases on campus if individuals do not disclose their COVID-19 status to the university or health authorities. Thus, the information reported on the dashboard includes only known positive cases.

USD sends weekly COVID-19 updates to the campus community via email to ensure that faculty, staff and students are aware of university protocols, resources and guidance. The university has also hosted webinars about vaccines and university protocols in light of COVID-19 to maintain transparency and share educational resources with the USD community.

If students, parents, faculty, staff or community members have questions related to the university’s response to COVID-19, they may reach out via email to COVID19@usd.edu and a COVID-19 Task Force member will respond as soon as possible.