

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A FALL RETURN TO INDEPENDENT HIGHER EDUCATION IN CALIFORNIA

AICCU RESTART HIGHER EDUCATION TASK FORCE



1121 L Street, Suite 802
Sacramento, CA 95814

916.446.7626
aiccu@aiccu.edu

Last updated: June 22, 2020

ABOUT AICCU

The Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU) is comprised of 85 independent, nonprofit colleges and universities, which make up the Independent California Colleges and Universities (ICCU) sector. The ICCU sector plays a pivotal role in the development of the state's model higher education offerings and in making California a symbol of innovation across the globe. Within California, ICCU institutions award over 20 percent of all undergraduate degrees and over 50 percent of graduate degrees, making them the largest preparers of California's advanced workforce

INTRODUCTION

Without a doubt, the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) will have an impact on higher education—on students, faculty, the way education is delivered and experienced, and on the institution itself—for many months and years to come. We cannot, however, let uncertainty dictate the future of our state, nor can our colleges and universities veer from their missions of serving students and their communities. As we look toward the future, recognizing the changing coronavirus landscape, the independent, nonprofit higher education sector of California—a key provider of regional access and diverse college options—is committed to restarting our campuses in time for the fall term so students can begin or continue their journey toward their academic and career goals. We will do so in a way that is responsible for students, faculty, and staff, and that adheres to all federal, state, and county health requirements and individual campus needs.



The members of the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU) take this responsibility seriously. In this crisis, we have organized the AICCU Restart Higher Education Task Force to develop informed practices and actionable steps for nonprofit colleges and universities to adapt to their circumstances as they consider how to reopen dormitories, dining halls, and other campus facilities—in a way that prioritizes health and safety.

As chair of the AICCU Restart Higher Education Task Force, I am pleased to share this report on behalf of the presidents, chief financial officers, health and public safety staff, legal counsels, and other campus leaders who make up the task force. The checklists and guiding principles reported here reflect the values and independent nature of institutions and recognize that every campus is unique in size, location, and type—there cannot be a singular plan for reopening. The safe return of students, faculty, and staff will also depend on strong partnerships with local and state governments. The members of AICCU will continue our engagement with state and federal policymakers about the status and health and safety needs of our institutions as the fall term begins. I am grateful to each member of the Task Force for contributing their expertise and wisdom at such a crucial time.

INTRODUCTION

AICCU member institutions are situated across all regions of California and are the touchstones for many communities, contributing to the local and regional economies, as well as that of the state. As a sector, we enroll 380,000 students from all backgrounds and who reflect the dynamic diversity of California. Nonprofit higher education has a role and responsibility—in the nation and around the globe—to continue our mission of educating students and creating a more informed citizenry and equitable society. We are all in this together, and together we will persist in our shared and essential missions.

G. Gabrielle Starr
President, Pomona College

RECOMMENDED RETURN MEASURES

The purpose of this report is to provide key areas of consideration for institutions of higher education preparing to restart operations for the fall term.

These guidelines are not intended to be prescriptive nor should they be construed as establishing a standard of care, particularly given the diverse makeup of independent higher education institutions in California. Instead, they seek to help colleges and universities navigate the multifaceted nature of a restart. Thus, each college or university will need to tailor its plan based on its local health guidelines and campus community.

NOTE

This document is for the sole purpose of providing guidance for consideration. No legal, medical, or professional advice or opinions are given herein or may be relied upon. Each institution should consult with its own legal, medical, and professional advisors prior to implementing a restart plan.

The items presented here are the product of a detailed review of federal and state recommendations, conversations between task force members and representatives from Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, McKinsey & Company, Oliver Wyman, the Governor's Office, and the work of the task force over a five-week period.

Since March, the independent higher education sector has been following Governor Gavin Newsom's executive orders related to coronavirus health and safety measures. Transitioning quickly and successfully to remote learning, colleges and universities have been essential partners in the defense against community spread of COVID-19. Institutions will continue to do their part to limit the spread of the virus, give time for healthcare providers and first responders to meet the demands of the current circumstances, and ensure scarce resources are being directed to the state's most vulnerable populations.

With this commitment in place, the task force identified resources and approaches for AICCU member institutions to use as they develop plans in collaboration with local public health authorities. Thus, the task force encourages institutions to:

1. Track, understand, and comply with all federal, state, and local public health guidelines.
2. Develop a clear framework for restarting campus. This includes plans for:
 - a. *Repopulation*: Consider opening in stages; assess physical distancing measures for all campus spaces; continue to provide virtual accommodations

- for at-risk students, faculty, and staff; work with athletic conferences on additional guidelines.
- b. *Monitoring*: Have a health screening and diagnostic testing plan in place for returning students/staff/faculty; appoint a COVID-19 coordinator to oversee internal efforts and external partnerships; develop a contact tracing plan.
 - c. *Containment*: Where appropriate and feasible, have a dedicated space to isolate infected individuals for 14 days and consider testing and isolation protocols for close contacts; establish triggers and determine depth of a contract tracing plan; establish protocols/services for those infected.
 - d. *Suspension of on-campus activities*: Establish circumstances for and develop a contingency plan in case of the need to minimize on-campus activities.
 - e. *Maintenance*: Healthy environments—establish cleaning and sanitation protocols; make plans for acquiring and maintaining supplies of PPE, consistent with the directives of public health agencies.
 - f. *Campus and community collaboration*: Engage key stakeholders in developing and implementing plans, in order to help ensure commitment, compliance, and feasibility across all populations.
3. Develop strong regional partnerships with other independent and public colleges and universities to share expertise and resources that support responding to this issue.
 4. Utilize the task force checklists and consult other available guidance documents to ensure your campus is considering the many details required to responsibly reopen.
 5. Develop a pandemic response team on your campus and clearly identify roles, including a point of contact. This should be widely communicated.
 6. Develop a strong and clear communications plan for the fall for both internal and external stakeholders.
 7. Work collectively with AICCU to seek needed regulatory relief in order to respond to changing program requirements due to COVID-19 while prioritizing student success.
 8. Create a plan for a range of learning modalities in anticipation of changes to public health directives to minimize potential disruptions. This includes maintaining information technology infrastructure, training and support for learning management and delivery systems, and institutional access to needed educational equipment for all students and faculty.
 9. Prepare appropriate mental and emotional health services to support students, faculty and staff in response to COVID-19-related trauma (e.g., social isolation, racial discrimination, personal and professional trauma).

MEMBERSHIP

The AICCU Restart Higher Education Task Force was formed in mid-April 2020 to provide suggestions on restarting nonprofit higher education institutions in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic in California. Below is a list of the task force members.

Members

- Karen Briggs, Associate Vice President & Chief Human Resources Officer, University of San Diego
- Bob Brower, President, Point Loma Nazarene University
- Terri Carbaugh, Vice Chancellor of Public Affairs, Brandman University
- Janine DuMontelle, Vice President & General Counsel Office of Legal Affairs, Chapman University
- Ronald Ellis, President, California Baptist University
- Jon Endicott, Vice President of Enrollment Management, Fresno Pacific University
- David Fike, President, Golden Gate University
- Paul Fitzgerald, S.J., President, University of San Francisco
- Stephanie Kalfayan, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Stanford University
- Devorah Lieberman, President, University of La Verne
- Debra Martin, Vice President for Administration & Finance, Mount Saint Mary's University, Los Angeles
- John Ojeisekhoba, Associate Vice President & Chief of Campus Safety, Biola University
- Phil Phillips, Chief Operating Officer, Pepperdine University
- Nicola Pitchford, Vice President for Academic Affairs & Dean of the Faculty, Dominican University of California
- G. Gabrielle Starr, President, Pomona College, **Chair**
- David Wright, Senior Vice President, Administration, University of Southern California

Advisory Members

- Natasha Baker, Managing Attorney, Novus Law Firm, Inc.
- Sam Glick, Partner, Health and Life Sciences Practice, Oliver Wyman
- Rekha Murthy, M.D., Vice President for Medical Affairs & Associate Chief Medical Officer, Professor of Medicine, Cedars-Sinai
- Kristen Soares, President, AICCU
- Randy Tarnowski, Director of Research, AICCU
- Veronica Villalobos Cruz, Managing Partner, Cruz Strategies

SECTION 1: FRAMEWORK AND TERMINOLOGY

TASK FORCE AREAS OF ENGAGEMENT

Task force members formed specialized subcommittees to identify individual and sector-level needs in five key areas to restart higher education in California. Together, these subcommittees developed the checklists that are presented in the remaining sections. Items in the checklists are suggestions and should not be considered requirements.

The table below lists these five areas of engagement, as well as the guiding questions that framed their conversations. All areas of engagement used an equity lens when framing the discussion.

Topic	Guiding Question
Health & Safety	What considerations are needed regarding health and safety to restart our institutions and decrease risks to students, staff, and faculty?
Learning, Academics & Student Life	What considerations are needed regarding learning and academics to restart institutions and support student success as well as research and community outreach?
Personnel	What considerations are needed regarding personnel to restart institutions and support faculty and staff?
Finance & Legal ¹	What considerations are needed around finances and institutional liability to restart institutions and create stability in operations?
Communications & External Relations	What considerations are needed regarding external relations and communications to ensure appropriate transparency for various constituent groups?

¹ The checklist for the Finance & Legal topic is presented in a separate document

COMMON TERMINOLOGY

Below is a short table detailing key terminology related to restarting higher education institutions. Each term contains a short definition and links to relevant federal and state resources.

Term	Description
Personal protective equipment (PPE)	<p>Personal protective equipment, including masks, face coverings, gloves, gowns, etc., helps protect individuals from potentially infectious individuals and materials.²</p> <p>Institutions of higher education should assess constituent needs when planning for PPE procurement, as shortages are currently posing a challenge to the U.S. healthcare system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>CDC guidance</i>³ - <i>California guidance</i>⁴
Contact tracing	<p>Contact tracing is a disease control strategy that involves investigating cases and their contacts who meet criteria for exposure, to facilitate interruption of disease transmission—typically by asking cases to isolate and contacts to quarantine at home voluntarily. Efforts at both the state (through California Connected) and county-level are currently moving forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>CDC guidance</i>⁵ - <i>California guidance</i>⁶
Social/physical distancing	<p>Social distancing, also called “physical distancing,” means keeping space (commonly referred to as a minimum 6-foot separation) between individuals, as well as compliance with public health directives for reducing transmission of respiratory droplets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>CDC guidance</i>⁷ - <i>California guidance</i>⁸

² Note that PPE has more commonly been referred to in relation to equipment needed by healthcare workers, social services workers and other first responders. The use of the term “PPE” has since been expanded to mean more general protections for all individuals. In either case, it will be important to clarify the usage of the term and audience, particularly if considering procurement.

³ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/index.html>

⁴ <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/UseofPersonalProtectiveEquipmentduringCOVID19.aspx>

⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/open-america/contact-tracing-resources.html>

⁶ <https://covid19.ca.gov/contact-tracing/#:~:text=Contact%20tracing%20is%20an%20anonymous,individuals%20can%20be%20contacted%2C%20too.>

⁷ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html>

⁸ <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/ncov2019.aspx>

INTRODUCTION

Pandemic Response Team (PRT)	<p>A single point of contact on each campus, as well as staff who focus on each of the key areas listed below, including contact tracing, isolation, quarantine, medical care, sanitization, communication, academic progress, and community needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- CDC guidance⁹
Vulnerable populations ¹⁰	<p>Individuals identified by public health authorities as being at higher risk of infection or complications from COVID-19, including individuals over age 65, those with certain underlying health conditions, and populations in restricted institutional settings (e.g., residents of nursing or elder care facilities or incarcerated individuals)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- CDC guidance¹¹

⁹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/considerations.html>

¹⁰ Note that “vulnerable populations” as defined by the CDC with respect to COVID-19 is not the same as a qualified individual with a disability who may be entitled to a reasonable accommodation under the ADA and FEHA.

¹¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html>

SECTION 2: HEALTH AND SAFETY



Health and Safety concerns the health, safety, and well-being of all members of the campus community. These checklist items identify considerations that will help to prioritize safety and minimize risks to students, staff, and faculty.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Establish a healthy environment that is as safe as possible for students, faculty, and staff to return to campus;
- Within the institution's particular setting and capacity, implement infectious disease control guidelines and training programs;
- Based on guidance from public health officials, develop a broad range of risk reduction strategies to mitigate exposure to the virus;
- Provide appropriate and available personal protective equipment (PPE) to campus constituents, and proactively develop systems and plans to manage potential roadblocks or virus resurgence.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- Athletic programs and facilities
- Campus buildings
- Campus guests
- Dining and eateries
- Faculty and staff
- General student body
- International students
- Lifelong learners
- PPE/supplies
- Residence halls

NOTE

This section contains two checklists:

- The *general checklist* contains health and safety items critical to reopening that are useful for all institutions (i.e. residential and non-residential).
- The *building-specific checklist* goes into greater detail for spaces that serve unique functions within the campus and require special consideration (e.g., residence halls, dining facilities).

HEALTH AND SAFETY CHECKLIST (GENERAL)		
Consideration	Question	Status
Students, faculty, and staff	Is there a comprehensive campus awareness and prevention educational program in place? This may include guidelines, posters, videos, and delivery method (i.e. new student and employee orientation program, mandatory courses, meetings, and more).	
All campus buildings	Is there a plan in place to keep all high-contact surfaces sanitized on a frequent basis? ¹²	
All campus buildings	Is there a plan to assess whether all HVAC filtration systems can be configured to provide “clean-to-dirty” directional airflows? ¹³	
Pandemic response team and point of contact	Is there a 24/7 point of contact, detailed plan, and a Campus Pandemic Response Team to rapidly respond to a resurgence of the virus? ¹⁴	
Classrooms	Has a comprehensive plan been developed to reconfigure classrooms to meet social distancing requirements?	
Dining and eateries	Is there a health and safety plan in place to keep campus eateries in service to students? ¹⁵	
Mental health support	Is there a mental health support plan and resources available to students who are under isolation and/or students who are feeling anxious about COVID-19?	

¹² For example, classrooms and service counters. Considerations include the regular sanitizing of desks at the beginning of each class session by students themselves.

¹³ See CDC recommendations: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>

¹⁴ As per CDC recommendations: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/considerations.html>. Check with county public health department for recommendations. In the case of Los Angeles, the recommendation is to designate a “COVID-19 Compliance Officer who is responsible for establishing and enforcing all COVID-19 safety protocols, ensuring that staff and students receive education about COVID-19 and serve as a liaison to DPH in the event of an outbreak on campus.”

¹⁵ This may include PPE for dining staff, occupancy limits, designated times to access specific eateries for specific cohorts of students, social distancing, pre-packaged meal service, contactless serving, sneeze guards and disposable, single-use plates, cups, and cutlery. More detailed considerations of this are in the next table (Health and Safety Checklist -- Building Specific).

HEALTH AND SAFETY CHECKLIST (GENERAL)		
Consideration	Question	Status
Re-entry plan	Is there a re-entry plan for faculty and staff? ¹⁶	
Testing	Has there been a determination whether all students/faculty/staff or a subpopulation will be tested for COVID-19? Is there a strategy to determine the frequency of testing and to ensure adequate supply and staffing to support testing?	
Health services and health center	Are there strategies in place to care for students with coronavirus symptoms versus other routine appointments?	
Influenza Vaccine	Is there plan in place to encourage/offer flu vaccine receipt for students, faculty and staff	
Contact tracing	Is there a team (internal or external) readily available to conduct contact tracing? Is this team leveraging county-level work in contact tracing?	
Limitations on gathering	Is there a policy for the maximum number of individuals that may congregate together? What are the consequences for policy violations? ¹⁷	
Safety and well-being – discrimination	Have special precautions been established to support the safety and well-being of vulnerable students such as those in heavily impacted populations due to indirect impact of COVID-19?	
Transactional spaces	Is it feasible to install partitions or other separation measures in transactional spaces?	

¹⁶ Concepts and areas to focus on include staggered re-entry, combination of remote and in-person work hours, at-risk employees, guidelines and training, reconfiguring/physical distancing at work areas, work and common area sanitization, PPE guidelines, protocols when an employee is ill, and mental health support.

¹⁷ This is likely to differ based on venue. Communication of this policy and monitoring should be explored.

HEALTH AND SAFETY CHECKLIST (GENERAL)

Consideration	Question	Status
Athletics programs	What considerations have been given to reduce risk in athletic programs, including sanitization and awareness? This includes a consideration of all events, practices and meetings. ¹⁸	
PPE and sanitization supplies	How might the institution procure an adequate supply of PPE and other sanitation items consistent with public health care requirements (e.g., stationary hand sanitizers, personal hand sanitizers, disinfectant wipes, and no-touch thermometers)?	
International students	Is there a plan to accommodate students arriving from outside the U.S. or hotspots within the U.S. who may be required to quarantine for 14 days upon arrival? ¹⁹	
General health policies	If face coverings are mandatory on campus, what are the consequences for failing to wear one? Is there a plan to provide them to students, faculty, staff, and visitors who may have inadvertently forgotten theirs?	
Classrooms	Have one-way routes enabling social distancing while entering and exiting the classroom been considered?	
Classrooms	Have alternative and extra spaces in classrooms been assessed (as necessitated by the reduction in capacity caused by social distancing)?	
Classrooms	Are waiting areas possible to allow socially distanced entry into classrooms?	
Offices	Has office infrastructure accounted for how best to facilitate social distancing and limit high-touch surfaces?	

¹⁸ Some areas of focus include athletic facilities, practice sessions, team meetings, athletic trainer sessions, travel, and handling of visiting competition. Has the institution coordinated with the relevant athletic conferences on what will be scheduled?

¹⁹ CDC recommendations for returning from international travel can be found here:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/after-travel-precautions.html>.

HEALTH AND SAFETY CHECKLIST (GENERAL)

Consideration	Question	Status
Offices	Has the institution considered elimination of open office or shared space areas, or policies governing responsible use?	
Offices	Have one-way routes in hallways, common areas, and building entrances and exits been assessed to promote social distancing while navigating the office?	
Office and staff	Has the institution assessed the feasibility of alternate work schedules or locations, whereby, e.g., 50% of the staff work in the office on a given day and staff can work in every other cubicle?	
Transportation	Is there a plan to educate riders of the need to enter from the back or middle of vehicles or other measures to minimize exposure to driver?	
Transportation	Is there a plan to facilitate social distancing and driver/rider safety in institution-provided vehicles to accommodate travel to, from, and within the campus?	
Transportation	Is there a plan for movement to and from quarantine/isolation locations or temporary off-campus housing?	
Screening	How will the institution handle (internally or externally) symptom or health screening and diagnostic testing for students/staff/faculty? ²⁰	

²⁰ This may be a self-assessed test (proprietary or from sources such as the Mayo Clinic (<https://www.mayoclinic.org/covid-19-self-assessment-tool>), temperature checks, etc.

HEALTH AND SAFETY CHECKLIST (BUILDING SPECIFIC)		
Consideration	Question	Status
Dining facilities	Has the institution considered touchless transaction technology, mobile ordering, or meal delivery?	
Dining facilities	How will the institution handle single-serve beverages, and individual condiments? If disposable containers, does the plan incorporate supply-chain implications?	
Dining facilities	Where applicable, is there a plan for efficiently providing meals to quarantined students?	
Dining facilities	How might the institution adjust seating in dining areas, including developing a rotating dining schedule to limit student gathering?	
Dining facilities	Has there been consideration of converting or eliminating self-serve stations and moving exclusively to grab-and-go meals? ²¹	
Dining facilities	Are there clearly designated areas for students waiting in line for food, and designation of the flow of foot traffic through the dining facility?	
Sporting venues	How will the institution facilitate social distancing (for athletes, coaches, and fans) and any special athletics-specific protocols that may be enacted due to athlete travel to, and contact with, other schools?	
Sporting venues	Has there been consideration of implementing capacity limitations on each venue? ²²	
Gyms	How might the institution institute physical distancing and screening procedures within the facilities?	

²¹ In the case of multiple dining facilities, closing certain spaces or rotating may be an option.

²² See: California's COVID-19 INDUSTRY GUIDANCE: Fitness Facilities (June 12, 2020): <https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-fitness.pdf>

HEALTH AND SAFETY CHECKLIST (BUILDING SPECIFIC)		
Consideration	Question	Status
Gyms	Can the institution implement a cleaning and disinfection protocol in place to sanitize equipment? Will materials meeting CDC's guidance be provided? ²³	
Gyms	Has there been consideration regarding implementing capacity limitations on each venue to meet all social distancing and capacity requirements? ²⁴	
Art and entertainment venues	Has there been consideration of how best to facilitate social distancing (for performers, personnel, and the audience), including capacity limitations to maintain social distancing requirements?	
Libraries	Has the institution assessed potential transmission in the library: sneeze guards at the service desk, a self-checkout station, spaced out seating in group study areas, standards on disinfecting books?	
Libraries	Will the institution limit the number of people in library study areas or rooms? Has a workable method for limiting public use of the library been discussed?	
Libraries	Have reference and research assistance schedules and procedures been adjusted to encourage text and other methods of remote consultation over in-person contact?	
Outdoor recreation areas	Have outdoor recreation areas accounted for social distancing? Will there be enhanced cleaning protocols?	
Campus furniture	Has unnecessary furniture and furniture with a higher risk of capturing droplets (e.g., soft or fabric-upholstered furnishings) been removed?	

²³ See: California's COVID-19 INDUSTRY GUIDANCE: Fitness Facilities (June 12, 2020): <https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-fitness.pdf>

²⁴ See: California's COVID-19 INDUSTRY GUIDANCE: Fitness Facilities (June 12, 2020): <https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-fitness.pdf>

HEALTH AND SAFETY CHECKLIST (BUILDING SPECIFIC)		
Consideration	Question	Status
Residence halls	How will the institution sanitize restrooms and other high-touch surface areas inside residence halls?	
Residence halls	Can the institution adjust arrivals for move-in day to ensure social distancing is maintained?	
Residence halls	Can the institution acquire hand sanitizers for use in the lobby or areas frequented by students and others?	
Residence halls	Is there a plan to reconfigure residence hall rooms and common areas to minimize large gatherings or overcrowding?	
Residence halls	Are there protocols in place for physical distancing requirements and has there been consideration of how the rules will be enforced?	
Residence halls	Where available, has on-campus housing with private bathrooms or other appropriate isolation facilities in accordance with public health guidelines been identified for use as isolation units for students who may not be able to be isolated off-campus or at home? If not available, what are other options?	
Residence halls	How will institutions identify, isolate and care for students showing symptoms of COVID-19? ²⁵	
Residence halls	Could the institution develop a rapid sanitization team and a plan to handle areas potentially exposed to COVID-19?	
Residence halls	Has consideration been given to cohorts and/or visitor policies to minimize cross-contact in residence halls?	

²⁵ This includes steps to relocate students to isolation location, meal delivery plan, completion of classes remotely, and other necessary support.

HEALTH AND SAFETY CHECKLIST (BUILDING SPECIFIC)

Consideration	Question	Status
Residence halls	Has consideration been given to making housing assignments based on COVID-19 immunity or other COVID-19 risk factors? What privacy considerations might be implicated?	
Residence halls	Is there a plan to implement one-way routes in hallways and common areas where feasible to promote social distancing while navigating the residence halls?	
Residence halls	How will the institution accommodate students who must be quarantined? How will the institution facilitate social distancing, minimization of gatherings between students of different housing units, and, if applicable, enhanced cleaning protocols?	
Residence halls	Has there been a consideration of the need and ability to set aside specific housing units for students who require quarantine/isolation?	
Residence halls	Has there been consideration of off-campus housing to facilitate health, safety, social distancing, and quarantine/isolation needs?	
Residence halls	Has consideration been given to possible health department mandates which may limit capacity in residential spaces (e.g., single occupancy of all rooms)? Is there a contingency plan?	

SECTION 3: LEARNING, ACADEMICS, AND STUDENT LIFE



Learning, Academics, and Student Life concerns the experience of student learning and engagement within the institution's community. These checklist items identify considerations that will support student success and growth, and support for faculty.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Ensure the health and safety of all students, staff, and faculty while preserving the continuity of education and research, as much as possible.
- Ensure equity of access to remote or adapted learning environments for all students and faculty.
- Provide support for teaching, whether in-person or remote.
- Maintain living and learning environments that support our collective mission.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- Remote education
- Access and equity
- Classroom safety protocols
- Diversity and equity
- Educational technology
- Faculty support services
- Fall semester modality – on-campus, fully online, or blended
- General health policies
- Health services – health center
- Fall orientation for new students

LEARNING, ACADEMICS, AND STUDENT LIFE CHECKLIST

Consideration	Question	Status
Remote education – learning assessment	Have new methods for assessing student learning in a remote context been identified? Have these delivery options been reviewed for accessibility?	
Remote education – faculty training	Will the institution provide all faculty members the training on technologies necessary for remote teaching?	
Remote education – student support	Have best practices been identified for engaging students, ensuring equity, and supporting students in the virtual classroom?	
Remote education – student attendance	How will the institution handle student attendance in a distance setting?	
Remote education – additional learning opportunities	What factors will be used to assess whether students may participate in internships, fieldwork, global learning, and service-learning opportunities virtually? ²⁶	
Access and equity – deaf and hard-of-hearing support	How will the institution address the access needs of students who rely on lip-reading and facial expression should the need for masks arise in instructional settings?	
Access and equity – access to technology	If feasible, can the institution provide long-term laptop rentals and internet access for students who may not have this service at home?	
Access and equity – international students	Is there a strategy to provide access to campus (remotely and/or in-person) for international students?	

²⁶ Institutions need to consider whether there are requirements for these programs that can be waived, flexibility that can be provided by accrediting or licensing entities, and whether new modes of learning align with requirements by accreditors.

LEARNING, ACADEMICS, AND STUDENT LIFE CHECKLIST

Consideration	Question	Status
Access and equity – international students	How will the institution support remote international students who may need to take courses outside of normal hours, and accommodate the time difference?	
Classroom cleaning	Is it feasible to modify course schedules to allow for disinfecting time between classes?	
New student summer registration	Have additional steps been taken to ensure intuitive individual student registration given the adjustments made for COVID-19?	
Research	Have the Institutional Review Board guidelines been shared and reviewed for safety and concerns with vulnerable populations?	
Visual and performing arts	Has there been consideration on how to handle some visual and performing arts (dance, music, vocal) classes due to the potential for enhanced risk of exposure?	
Laboratory coursework	Has there been consideration of allowing students to work in closer proximity to one another if students can wear enough PPE in labs (e.g. gloves, goggles, masks, lab coats)?	
Student groups and clubs	Has there been consideration of whether and which student clubs need to be suspended and how the decisions will be made and communicated?	
Student support	Can the institution implement additional student support services (e.g., tutoring, technical support, career services, counseling) to ensure student success?	

LEARNING, ACADEMICS, AND STUDENT LIFE CHECKLIST

Consideration	Question	Status
Educational technology - specialized labs	Has there been an effort to consider new or adapted technology solutions available for specialized labs (science, simulation, graphics, communications)?	
Educational technology	How will faculty members or TAs proctor/validate remote exams?	
IT	Is campus IT infrastructure currently able to shift to online or hybrid delivery of courses and able to switch between modalities within the term?	
IT	Has there been a consideration of the bandwidth capacity to ensure it is sufficient to support online classes?	
IT	Is it prudent to throttle non-class activities (e.g., video or music streaming) to prioritize bandwidth for classes?	
Orientation	How might the institution modify student orientation to be in compliance with the institution's COVID-19 response? Have students, staff, and faculty been informed of these plans?	
Orientation	Has consideration been given on how to provide students with educational materials about the institution's approach to preventing transmission of COVID-19 on campus? ²⁷	

²⁷ This may include: Proper respiratory etiquette; hand hygiene; required use of cloth face coverings when in contact with other students or employees on campus; appropriate use of cloth face coverings, including the need to launder cloth face coverings regularly; recommendations on what to do if they are feeling sick; and process to access health care services on campus.

SECTION 4: PERSONNEL



Personnel concerns the human resource needs and support of campus faculty and staff. These checklist items identify considerations that will support staff and faculty in their responsibilities.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Facilitate meaningful on-campus experiences while minimizing the risk of infection to all members of our campus communities wherever possible.
- Implement effective prevention and mitigation protocols consistent with public health agency requirements for critical on-site roles.
- Explore different work modalities to allow for efficient campus operations while de-densifying campus to reduce likelihood of virus transmission.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • Academic affairs | • Health and safety |
| • Campus leadership | • Human resources |
| • Facilities and real estate | • Procurement for health and safety |
| • Finance and payroll | • Risk management for human resources |

PERSONNEL CHECKLIST		
Location	Question	Status
Human resources	What will the institution do when an employee receives a positive COVID-19 test? ²⁸ How will the institution handle claims that the infection happened at work, thus having to consider the issue of workers' compensation?	
Human resources	Can employee roles be categorized based on the degree to which they must be physically present on campus (e.g. must be on-site full-time, can continue remotely, hybrid)?	
Human resources	Are there protocols in place to address (1) employees whose roles would require them to be onsite but are requesting accommodations (under the ADA or otherwise), (2) employees who are in high-risk categories and who are concerned about returning to work, and (3) employees who do not meet standards for accommodations under the ADA/FEHA but do not want to return to work?	
Human resources	Has the institution considered, where possible, how to reduce wait times for screening of staff (such as staggering office start times)? What are the implications under the Labor Code for this time?	
Human resources	How will the institution regularly and efficiently communicate with employees regarding evolving health policies and safe practices, as well as training programs (if needed)?	

²⁸ Who will speak with them? Who will do campus contact tracing and communication? Who will communicate with the county? What communication will be planned/sent?

PERSONNEL CHECKLIST

Location	Question	Status
Human resources	Have supervisors been trained on how to communicate expectations, enforce standards, and manage employees who are anxious about returning to work? Is there a plan to assist supervisors to rework schedules where possible or on-site workdays to make campus services effective, while limiting interactions?	
Human resources	How will HR departments to obtain information regarding new requirements/training protocols for employees to work remotely?	
Human resources	Have sick leave and leave of absence policies been reviewed and/or modified to ensure they are in alignment with federal, state, local laws and institutional values during this time?	
Human resources	Has there been a review of collective bargaining agreements with regard to changes to wages, hours, and working conditions? Has notice to the union been triggered?	
Risk management	Is there a mechanism to track cases and measures taken? Should there be? Is there a process to report any cases where exposure is believed to have happened on campus to Cal/OSHA? Are protocols in place to ensure confidentiality and privacy are appropriately maintained?	
Risk management	Has the institution considered campus policies regarding minors to determine if policy changes are necessary?	

PERSONNEL CHECKLIST

Location	Question	Status
Academic affairs	How will department heads/deans, in consultation with the faculty if required, determine which courses will be taught on-site, online, or hybrid? Has there been consideration of how these decisions align with faculty availability, given health conditions, childcare, etc., and has the appropriate shared governance process been engaged?	
Academic affairs	Will faculty will have responsibilities for health safety steps such as conducting temperature screenings and, if so, has this been communicated to them and appropriate training developed?	
Department heads, facilities, procurement	Is it possible to modify office space to ensure physical distancing between workspaces? Could the institution purchase and install barriers (where physical distancing cannot be maintained) for positions that need to be partially or fully on campus?	
Facilities and real estate	Is there a process for regular communication with third-party landlords to work through facility workplace modifications and expectations?	
Facilities and real estate	How will the institution determine overall space needs, balancing physical distancing requirements (more space needed) and adoption of remote work (less space needed).	
Health and safety	Will the institution conduct health screenings (e.g., temperature or symptom screen) and are they in alignment with EEOC guidance? Have individuals responsible for screening been identified and trained or external agencies engaged?	

PERSONNEL CHECKLIST

Location	Question	Status
Health and safety	Is there a plan to make staff familiar with county health requirements regarding testing? How will the institution determine whether and how to procure test kits, determine who will conduct the tests, and how the results will be maintained?	
Health and safety	Has an assessment been made of the number of face coverings and face masks that could be needed to distribute to staff and faculty, and which employees will need which type of mask? Will employees be responsible for providing their own masks or will the institution provide them?	
Facilities	Have cleaning and sanitation protocols been established for office spaces, common areas, restrooms, etc., and has this information been shared with employees so they know their responsibilities?	
Facilities	Are emergency response protocol modifications in place for all-hazards emergencies that takes into consideration social distancing?	
Instructional technology services	Have additional tools been identified to help increase work effectiveness for roles that can continue to be remotely conducted?	
Contact Tracing	What will be the institutional responsibility for conducting contact tracing when employees receive a positive test (whether internally or through county/state programs)?	

SECTION 5: COMMUNICATIONS & EXTERNAL RELATIONS



Communications and External Relations concerns the internal and external transmission of critical information throughout institutional reopening. These checklist items identify considerations that will ensure appropriate and consistent transparency across various constituent groups.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Ensure all stakeholders understand how institutional protocols related to COVID-19 have or have not shifted roles and responsibilities.
- Monitor internal communications and external traditional and social media channels to better understand areas of concern related to COVID-19 and institutional response.
- Confirm that open lines of communication are in place (phone/text, social media, and traditional email) to allow communication from campus leadership to all stakeholders.
- Build a centralized, continually updated information hub of institutional protocols around COVID-19 (e.g. a micro-site on institutions' home page or related website).

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- Academic program delivery/faculty
- Associations and accreditors
- General student body
- Board of trustees
- Campus visitors
- Community partners
- Enrollment processes, students and staff
- Faculty and staff
- General public awareness/external
- Governance control and risk
- International students
- Media
- New and returning students
- Parents and families
- Residential students
- University management
- Vendors (bookstore, landscaping)

COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS CHECKLIST

Consideration	Question		Status
COVID-19 communications plans	Are each of the following groups clear about what is expected for the next academic term?	<i>Students</i>	
		<i>Faculty</i>	
		<i>Staff</i>	
		<i>Governing board</i>	
		<i>Education partners/community colleges</i>	
		<i>Campus leadership</i>	
COVID-19 FAQ	Has the institution considered having an FAQ that is posted to the website and is regularly updated, and supporting e-communications widely shared? Does this meet the Clery Act notification requirements?		
Leadership communications	Is there a mechanism in place for updates from the president, especially during an emergency?		
Critical staff members	Has the institution determined who are considered “critical staff members” (those whose presence on campus is required when the facility is open) and have they been notified of their status? Are there contingency plans if they are unable to be present?		
Contractor communications	Have the detailed responsibilities that contractors might play in reopening been identified and communicated with contractors?		
Contractor communications	Have commitments been affirmed by all contractors with obligations (as applicable)? Have required contractor contact-persons for questions/assistance been identified and communicated with?		
Emergency notification systems (ENS)	Is there an ENS in place? Can this augment existing ENS systems to include notifications of a regional COVID-19 outbreak?		
Communication to staff regarding emergency and health and safety protocols	Have staff been notified of all necessary COVID-19-precipitated modifications to existing protocols, and has a process been established for regular updates?		
Communication to students regarding emergency and health and safety protocols	Will there be a communication sent to the students regarding modifications to existing protocols, and has a process been established for regular updates?		

COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS CHECKLIST

Consideration	Question	Status
Residential students	Will the institution post social distancing/COVID-19 signs within residential halls? How will these requirements be communicated?	
Faculty	Have faculty been invited to submit feedback in the planning process? Is there a plan to ensure faculty receive regular communication about updated health and safety plans?	
Communications Committee	If you have an established central communications committee, is there a plan to communicate regularly and with an expectation that this committee be given the opportunity to submit feedback in the planning process?	
Vendors (bookstore, dining, landscaping)	How might the institution work with onsite vendors so they are aware the “return” date and of new health and safety protocols?	
Staff (general)	Have staff been invited to submit feedback in the planning process? Will the institution ensure staff receive regular communication about updated health and safety plans?	
Governing board	Is there a plan to include the governing board in the planning process, and to regularly communicate with them changes and updates to the plan?	
Associations (AICCU, NCAA, WASC, SCAIAC)	Have the appropriate associations and accrediting organizations been updated with campus restart plans, and is there a process to regularly provide updates to them?	
COVID-19 communications plan – new and returning students	Can the institution have a designated individual monitoring social media for COVID-19 related posts and a designated crisis communications person available to quickly	

SECTION 6: CONTINUED SUPPORT

STATE SUPPORT

As part of this work, task force members identified emergent opportunity areas for support and partnerships between state and the independent higher education sector:

1. **Testing and PPE procurement support:** Support from state for procuring key PPE and testing at scale. Assistance for institutions developing partnerships with local hospitals that can provide testing services.
2. **Contact tracing training/mobilization:** Opportunity for the state and institutions to partner to train institutional stakeholders—including students—to trace and isolate infections within and around institutional communities.
3. **Mental health:** Support for the growing mental health needs of students experiencing stress and anxiety associated with the pandemic. Ongoing regulatory flexibility from the state will help ensure mental health services can be provided to students remotely, if needed. More collaboration with the state in aligned areas (e.g. growing mental health needs of students; addressing high infection rates among communities of color and the impacts on students from those communities; addressing xenophobic and racist attacks, such as those that have already been reported against Asian American students).
4. **Support around liability language:** Postsecondary educational institutions in California need a timely, temporary, and targeted safe harbor from liability where the institutions have made good faith efforts to comply with applicable local, state, and federal public health standards;
5. **Liquidity:** State assistance in identifying and securing access to zero- or low-interest loans to provide liquidity for institutions to maintain student supports and academic offerings.
6. **Regulatory relief for distance education:** California is not part of the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements. To serve an out-of-state student who cannot return to campus, each institution must go state-by-state to gain permission to offer education services in that state. This is costly and duplicative of efforts. Institutions need both short-term and long-term solutions to state authorization needs.
7. **Continued flexibility to support the workforce pipeline:** The Newsom Administration issued executive orders to give students and programs flexibility to meet certification and licensure requirements. These should be extended to ensure the workforce pipeline in key fields continues to flow amid this crisis.
8. **Student financial assistance:** The pandemic has created greater financial hardship and uncertainty particularly for California's low-income families and students attending independent and public universities. The California Student Aid Commission should explore options on how to equitably address the growing unmet needs of California students to support retention and degree completion.

AICCU COMMITMENTS

As part of its work, the task force identified emergent opportunity areas for support and partnerships between state and ICCU institutions:

1. **Ongoing Task Force Support:** AICCU will convene the task force on a recurring basis to keep abreast of development and continue to make recommendations based on the same.
2. **Costing/procurement:** AICCU will help support the independent segment in ways of procuring key materials at scale.
3. **Webinars/virtual meetings:** AICCU will convene webinars on high-interest topics, including mental health (students, faculty, staff); cost-saving procurement opportunities; engagement with financing authorities; other critical partners.
4. **Virtual group spaces:** AICCU will continue to manage virtual group spaces to ensure that resources and knowledge are shared within the sector and broader community.
5. **Engaging with policymakers:** AICCU will continue to engage with state and federal policymakers, and create opportunities for AICCU institutions to participate, on key issues related to emergency funds for campuses and our vulnerable students, loan opportunities, and critical legislation to ensure the needs of independent higher education are understood.