



July 26, 2022

**Bon Secours Southside
College of Health Sciences**

Dear Students,

Please pay close attention to this important message.

The purpose of this communication is to update you on the College's COVID-19 prevention strategies. In March this past year we communicated that due to the change in the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) [published guidelines](#) and Bon Secours' policy, whether masks need to be worn is determined in relation to community transmission levels. At that time the rate of transmission and the number of patients hospitalized with COVID-19 had significantly improved in our communities which allowed us to go to a mask optional policy. However, for Richmond and the surrounding counties, COVID-19 Community Levels are now within the defined High Level which requires us to enhance our prevention measures to include:

- **Effective immediately, all students, staff, and faculty are required to wear a mask on campus when in the presence of others.**
- [Get tested](#) if you have [symptoms](#). Report your test findings through the following [COVID-19 link](#) and alert your faculty as needed. Many of us are used to ignoring or pushing through signs of illness; however, we need to intentionally make different decisions to keep our campus and community safe. I would like to remind you that if you are experiencing any of the following symptoms, you should not come to campus, practicum setting, or be near others even if vaccinated.
 - Fever, chills, fatigue, muscle or body aches, or headache
 - Cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing
 - New loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion, or runny nose,
 - Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Continue to clean before and after use of an area.
- Practice social distancing when possible.
- Avoid eating with others. Utilize outdoor gathering tables when weather permits.

Currently our plan is to keep gathering places like the lounge, study rooms, and library open and to allow in-person meetings. We ask that you are mindful about making decisions that support the health and operations of our campus. We will continue to monitor COVID-19 community transmission levels regularly and if warranted we will communicate to you if mitigation strategies can change. If you have any questions, please feel free to email me.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Swineford

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