



09/23/21 Email from Dr. Stevens to Campus Community

Dear College of Saint Mary Community:

The decision has been made to **extend CSM's indoor mask requirement through the end of the fall 2021 semester**. Many factors came into play while deciding if we would extend the mask expectation past September 15, 2021. These included:

- **Community Immunity:** As a community working together to lessen the spread of COVID-19, we have taken the time to assess the prevalence of vaccinations on campus during the first several weeks of the fall semester.
 - 68% of our full-time student body stated they are fully vaccinated, which is higher than our Spring of 2021 survey.
 - 81% of full-time faculty, 44% of adjuncts, and 67% of staff report they are fully vaccinated.
 - Our overall campus community vaccination rate is 67%, which is lower than what we would like.
- **External Guidance:** We continue to monitor guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Douglas County Health, and the University of Nebraska Medical Center. At this time, wearing masks indoors and encouraging vaccination of community members continues to be encouraged.
- **Federal Expectations:** Earlier this month, the White House shared President Biden's COVID-19 Action Plan: [President Biden's COVID-19 Plan | The White House](#). One element, which will impact College of Saint Mary, is the new OSHA rule in development:
*"The Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is developing a rule that will require all employers with 100 or more employees to **ensure their workforce is fully vaccinated or require any workers who remain unvaccinated to produce a negative test result on at least a weekly basis before coming to work.** OSHA will issue an Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) to implement this requirement. This requirement will impact over 80 million workers in private sector businesses with 100+ employees."*

Human Resources is working on procedures for collecting and verifying vaccinations. Procedures for weekly test results are yet to be defined. **That said, we have been informed that all CSM employees, including full-time and part-time faculty, staff, adjuncts, and student employees will be subject to the vaccination or weekly testing requirement.**

The COVID-19 Taskforce members Dr. David Ferber (chair), Dr. Kathleen Zajic, Dr. Jeff Keyte, Dr. Amanda Roe, Kristine Leick, Kristofer Czerwicz, and Rita Wiley continue to meet regularly.

Areas of focus include:

- **Vaccination Opportunities:** We are reaching out to the Douglas County Health Department to request hosting a vaccination drop-in clinic here on campus this fall. In the meantime, community members who are not yet vaccinated are encouraged to schedule an appointment by visiting this [LINK](#) for locations.
- **Educational Resources:** Since 32.6% of unvaccinated students questioned the vaccine's safety and effectiveness, the COVID-19 Monitoring Team held an open session in the dining hall where students could ask Dr. Keyte and Dr. Roe any vaccination questions. We placed myth and fact sheets regarding the vaccination on bulletin boards and tables across campus at the beginning of the semester. During welcome days, I spoke with all new students about the importance of COVID-19 Safety, which included practicing social distancing, wearing masks, and the importance of vaccinations. Lastly, the COVID-19 Monitoring Team is also reaching out to Douglas County Health to schedule a Zoom Educational Event. The idea of the event is to allow students, staff, and faculty to ask any vaccination or COVID-19 related questions to a Douglas County Health Team member.
- **Dashboard:** Since the start of the fall semester, we have had a total of five positive cases. The COVID-19 Taskforce plans to share a weekly dashboard update on MyCSM, including the Total Number of New Cases in Douglas County, Percentage of CSM Community Vaccinated, Number of Positive Cases Since the Beginning of Fall Semester, Total Number of Health Forms Submitted, and Number of Students Currently in Isolation or Quarantine.

Finally, we would like to congratulate our COVID-19 Vaccination survey participation winners who will all be receiving a \$250 Amazon Gift Card: Melissa Garcia (4th year OT Student), Mary Coufal (4th year OT Student), Grace Wilmes (4th year OT Student), Stephanie Edson (CSM Staff), and Dr. Beth Merkel (CSM Faculty).

Should you have any questions, please send them via the health question form at this [LINK](#).

Dr. Stevens

Dr. Maryanne Stevens, RSM
President
College of Saint Mary