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Facility Operations Impact

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Fall 2020 Facility Operations and Impact

Updated August 24, 2020

The health, safety, and wellbeing of faculty, staff, and students continues to be our highest priority in promoting a safe environment upon reopening the Carleton College campus during the COVID-19 pandemic. In anticipation of the decision to reopen Carleton, many efforts have been undertaken to develop operational standards to help protect and enhance the educational environment. It is this commitment to safety that is driving our efforts.

Carleton has a comprehensive strategy to mitigate the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, built upon U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO), and Minnesota Department of Public Health (MDH) guidance.

Primary Methods of Control

- **Physical distancing.** The goal of physical distancing (sometimes called “social distancing”) is to help us keep from infecting others. Keeping physical space between you and others – six feet – is one of the best tools we have to avoid exposure to the SARS-CoV-2 virus and slowing its spread. Since people can spread the virus before they know they are sick, it is important to keep this physical distance from others whenever possible, even if you have no symptoms.
- **Wearing face masks.** The CDC has posted guidance on [how to properly wear face coverings](#) to protect yourself and others.
- **Monitoring symptoms.** Employees and students must conduct symptom self-monitoring every day before reporting to work, class or any other campus activities.
- **Testing.**
- **Quarantine and isolation.**
- **Contact tracing.**
- **Reducing close-contact activities.**
- **“Sanitizing in and sanitizing out”** of classrooms and meeting rooms.

Campus-Wide Operational Changes

The Return to Campus Operations Team has coordinated the following overall changes on campus:

- In high-traffic areas, floor markings for physical distancing in any queues or waiting areas will be placed.
- Hand sanitizer stations and disinfectant supplies will be available at entrances to classrooms, meeting rooms and other key areas. This will allow our [“sanitize-in, sanitize-out” protocol](#).
- The use of box fans, ceiling fans and oscillating fans is discouraged. We would like to utilize the building HVAC system to its fullest potential.
- In common areas (Upper Sayles, Great Space, Weitz Commons, Anderson Atrium, etc.), furniture has been removed or redistributed to ensure physical distancing.
- In open, unfurnished areas (for example, the Art Gallery, Great Hall), a rule of thumb for COVID-19 Modified Occupancy is 36 square feet per person, as this allows at least six feet between people side-to-side and front-to-back.

- Equipment that has multiple users must be sanitized thoroughly between uses. Containers with pens for sharing, candy bowls, bowls of ‘freebies’ are discouraged. Disinfectant supplies will be available. Please refer to the [Fall 2020 Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfection Protocols](#).

Air Quality and Ventilation

Due to the age of the campus buildings, there is a broad variety of complexity, resiliency, and age in HVAC equipment, systems, controls and building automation systems (Siemens and Automated Logic). Due to the variability in our building systems, and the nature of the activities conducted in each building, the campus is applying a layered approach to minimize the risk of transmission. In addition to the primary exposure control strategies being applied on campus (e.g., remote work, physical distancing and cloth face coverings), secondary exposure control strategies are being applied to further reduce the risk of transmission in campus facilities. This includes various engineering controls (HVAC system modifications) and administrative controls (i.e., enhanced cleaning and disinfection), which are being applied throughout campus. A combination of these controls will be implemented when feasible and as necessary, based on risk and type of facility.

The following sections outline risk management strategies that are being applied in campus buildings to reduce the risk of transmission. These recommendations follow CDC and American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) guidance for building operations intended to slow the transmission of viruses via HVAC systems.

Outdoor Air Intake

The ventilation rates and outdoor air supply on many of the College’s ventilation systems can be adjusted to some degree. Significant changes, however, cannot be accomplished due to the design limitations of existing equipment. Facilities Management will monitor outdoor air supplies for proper operation and increase outdoor air intake wherever possible. These efforts will be limited by the need to maintain proper temperature and humidity for all building occupants, in particular during warm, humid summer weather and colder winter weather. In some buildings, such as residence halls, operable windows provide access to outdoor air. Facilities Management is working in conjunction with Environmental Health and Safety to evaluate and optimize the performance of all ventilation systems.

Air Filters

Building ventilation systems, where possible, already have filter systems (known as “MERV” rated), which are regularly maintained by Facilities Management, but are not necessarily designed to remove particles as small as SARS-CoV-2 (0.125 microns). Many of our ventilation systems are not designed to run with these ultra-low particulate filters, which create significantly increased resistance to airflow. Given that redesigning the systems is not feasible, maximizing their efficiency is the goal. Air handling units capable of operating with a MERV-13 rated filter are being upgraded to this higher efficiency filter.

Personal Air Filtration Devices

Personal air filtration devices are permitted on campus under certain conditions. The devices should be UL listed (tested by Underwriters Laboratories) and labeled, meaning they conform to widely established safety standards, and should only be plugged directly into a wall outlet, and not into an extension cord or

power strip. Although the College does not provide personal air filtration devices campus-wide, they will be placed strategically where warranted.

Building and Room Ventilation Rates

Ventilation rates and capacities for buildings and rooms are being reviewed. This data will be used to inform decisions on how spaces can be used while minimizing risk as planning teams meet with departments to determine operational procedures and protocols. The focus of this data gathering is on high use spaces and those spaces shared by multiple people such as:

- Classrooms
- Laboratories
- Dining Halls
- Common rooms, including spaces like the Library

This process will be ongoing throughout the year as circumstances and plans change.

Operations and Maintenance

Ensuring proper operation and function of the HVAC systems is an integral part of the risk minimization strategy. Building HVAC systems will be inspected at an increased frequency to ensure the proper operation and functionality of each system. Inspections will focus on the requirements outlined by ASHRAE, which include proper testing and cleaning of dampers, condensate drains and pans, outside air intakes, control valve actuation and ensuring filters are in good operating condition. The higher frequency of maintenance on air handlers will be ongoing throughout the COVID-19 pandemic response.

Modified Occupancies and Risk Management Strategies in Campus Facilities

The following sections outline additional risk management strategies that can be applied to further reduce the risk of transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in campus facilities.

Alternative Use Spaces

To meet the campus needs for academic and teaching purposes, various non-traditional spaces are being utilized, including open walled outdoor tents.

Building Entry

Every entrance area/lobby is unique. If the area largely functions as a hallway or vestibule, it will be treated as such.

- In some buildings, exits and entrances have been designated to encourage one-way traffic.
- Building access will be restricted and a One Card will be required to enter.
- Signs about mask requirements and other protocols that impact how occupants use and move throughout will be posted at building entrances.

Stairs, Elevators, and Hallways

For elevators on campus, the modified occupancy is one (1), as most elevator cars are too small to accommodate multiple people while maintaining appropriate physical distancing. Modified occupancy for stairs and hallways is impractical to calculate because the occupants are generally in constant motion. However, care must be taken to monitor hallways/stairways for overcrowding at peak times and to prevent congregation at any time.

- Many stair towers are too narrow to provide a full six feet of physical distancing. Signs directing people to keep right as they go up or down in high traffic areas have been posted.
- Physical distancing queue management for waiting customers (Post Office, Sayles Cafe, etc.) has been added.
- Passenger limits have been posted on elevators.
- Elevator cleaning processes to ensure ongoing cleaning of high-touch surfaces like elevator buttons have been established.
- Faculty are encouraged to adhere to class start and end times to allow for the full passing period and avoid additional congestion in doorways and hallways.
- For hallways, the emphasis is on maintaining physical distancing as people pass each other.

Meeting Rooms

- Virtual meetings are encouraged. Because many employees will be working remotely, and because meeting in groups increases the risk of viral transmission, the default option should be to hold meetings in whole or part using the extensive range of available collaboration tools (e.g. Zoom, Google Hangouts, Microsoft Teams, telephone, etc.).
- Some tables and chairs will be removed or taped off to limit occupancy

Individual Workspaces (i.e. Private Offices)

Other than large offices, individual workspaces (defined by having a door and walls with a single desk) will be limited to a single occupancy. Visitors should not occupy offices where there is not sufficient room to maintain six feet of distance.

- While in a private office, the occupant can take their face covering off. If, however, a visitor enters, then both individuals must wear a face covering.
- Encourage meetings to be conducted in a designated room or online.
- Instruct office visitors that they should have conversations with office occupants from the doorway and not enter individual offices. Meetings should be held via videoconference or in a designated meeting room with sufficient space to maintain physical distancing.
- Faculty and staff may make themselves available for in-person office hours, which should take place in larger spaces (i.e Weitz or Anderson Atrium, Sayles-Hill, classrooms) or outdoors. They are also encouraged to offer virtual office hours in order to enable private conversations and support students who need to or wish to remain physically distant.
- Faculty and staff members who are more comfortable conducting office hours or meeting with students electronically should do so. Please consider the availability of technology to students and offer alternatives to Google Hangouts or Zoom meetings, such as phone calls.

Open Workspaces (i.e. Cubicles)

A *cubicle* is a partially enclosed office workspace that is separated from neighboring workspaces by partitions.

- Cloth face coverings are required when the employee leaves the cubicle.
- When a visitor approaches the cubicle, both the visitor and the cube occupant will put on their face covering.

- When alone in a cubicle with walls higher than face level when social distancing is maintained, employees can temporarily remove their face coverings but need to be prepared to wear when no longer alone.
- In cubicles with walls lower than face level, employees must wear a face covering at all times.
- Avoid using coworkers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment. If equipment has multiple users, please sanitize thoroughly between uses.
- Visual cues such as floor decals, colored tape, or signs should be used to assist others to know where they should stand while waiting to be assisted, etc.

Classrooms, Lecture Halls, Auditoriums

Modified occupancy for classrooms and lecture halls is based on the number of seats that can realistically be used while keeping students six feet apart, plus the instructor/faculty.

For lecture halls with fixed, auditorium-style seating, one configuration is that every other row is unoccupied and in the occupied rows, seats that are less than six feet from an open seat are taped off. An alternative is that seats are staggered to achieve six feet of space diagonally, with “unusable” seats taped off.

For classrooms and lecture halls with moveable seating and/or tables, excess seating has been removed so that enough seats remain to achieve the required physical distancing.

- Where feasible, an entrance door and an exit door have been designated.
- Seats should be assigned to help facilitate the contact tracing process. A room layout with numbered seats is provided for each classroom. Faculty will be asked to submit seating charts at the beginning of the term and provide an updated chart if seating changes during the term. Details on this process will be added prior to the start of the term.
- When feasible, markings will be placed on the floor to indicate proper seat locations and seat numbers.
- Disinfectant supplies are available for faculty to wipe down lectern, etc., at the start and end of every class. Teaching spaces will be disinfected daily to reduce the likelihood of virus spread. However, faculty and students are encouraged to wipe down and/or clean their own spaces before and after use. Custodial Services will provide easily accessible disinfectant wipes or other cleaning materials for this purpose.

Laboratories and Studios

The modified occupancy for laboratories is the number of workstations that can be occupied at one time while keeping occupants six feet apart, plus the instructor. Keep in mind that physical distancing requirements apply not only to adjacent workstations on the same bench, but also those behind and across from a given workstation.

The needs of every laboratory space are unique, and departments have developed specific plans for each lab to accomplish physical distancing while preventing contamination.

- Where possible, the equipment has been rearranged to encourage physical distancing.
- For teaching labs and studios, students can be spaced out along benches or tables to maintain six feet of separation. When working with lab partners, students are encouraged to wear both a cloth

face covering and goggles or safety glasses that fit snugly against the face. Individual departments and/or the college have acquired safety glasses and goggles that can be used in laboratories and studios as needed.

- Faculty should assign students to lab or studio benches/tables. If students are working within six feet of each other, then the faculty should communicate that information to the Contact Tracing Team at the beginning of the term, in order to assist with contact tracing.

Music Practice Rooms

- Well-fitting masks are required in indoor places on campus and are the personal responsibility of everyone to keep our community safe. This includes during practice, rehearsal and performance, unless you are playing a wind instrument.
- Music faculty are considering the use of specialized masks for instrumentalists and singers. More information will be shared by faculty when it is available.
- In Kracum Performance Hall, a maximum of 8 musicians will be able to rehearse together at any given time.
- In Shackel Rehearsal Hall, a maximum of 4 musicians will be able to rehearse. Individual practice rooms will be limited to piano students and others who play immovable instruments like harps. Portable instrumentalists and vocalists will not be allowed to use the practice rooms.
- Students will be assigned to particular practice rooms at particular times to aid with the contact tracing recommendations.

Residence Hall Rooms

- Occupancy rates in rooms have been adjusted to allow for six feet between heads when sleeping. Students are encouraged to sleep head to toe to help achieve this.
- Common or shared spaces in the residence halls, such as lobbies, shared kitchens, laundry facilities, and restroom facilities will have reduced or designated furnishings to encourage appropriate physical distancing and will be disinfected regularly (at least once daily). Additionally, disinfectant wipes will be available for residents to engage in self-service cleaning as desired. Adjusted occupancies will be posted for each of these spaces.
- At the discretion of Residential Life staff in consultation with the College administration, some of these shared spaces may be closed, if they are deemed not to be feasible for appropriate adjustments for physical distancing.
- Students living in the residence halls will be prohibited from having day or overnight visitors from outside the campus community in their rooms.
- Students living in residence halls may have guests in their rooms who are members of the campus community. Residents must limit guests in their rooms to a number that can remain physically distanced within the room at all times.
- Students will also be discouraged from unnecessary travel in order to limit exposure to those they visit elsewhere and limit exposure they may bring back to their residence.
- If a student does leave the area and suspects they may have been exposed to SARS-CoV-2, the student should complete a Community Concern Form, ideally before returning to campus, so that an appropriate arrangement may be made. (e.g. prefer staying off campus if possible until the situation is resolved; may be moved to an available quarantine room/floor for an appropriate period of time as available and as needed per current CDC guidance, etc.).

- Usage of common spaces, including lounges and public floor kitchens may be limited – we will display signage indicating if the space is closed or open. If open, additional information about maximum occupancy will be specified based on current guidelines.
- In an effort to minimize the number of residents using the laundry room at any given time, and to permit us to maintain our six feet of physical distancing expectations, signage will be posted in each laundry area with information regarding hours of operation and usage expectations.
- Students will be encouraged to engage virtually with fellow residents, friends, and family members by using technologies like Zoom, FaceTime and Google Meet.

Residence Hall Restrooms

- Mark “off-limits” sinks, urinals, etc. as needed to maintain physical distancing.
- Community bathrooms will be cleaned and disinfected by Custodial staff once per day. Cleaning supplies will be made available for residents to clean sinks and countertops as needed.
- In between these cleanings, cleaning and disinfection supplies will be made available for residents to clean sinks and countertops after activities beyond handwashing, particularly for activities like tooth brushing that release respiratory droplets and saliva.
- Residence halls with in-room bathrooms fall under the responsibility of the residents occupying that space. Cleaning and disinfecting supplies will be made available for residents to clean their spaces.

Food Service Areas

Food service areas include dining services (Burton Dining Hall, East Dining Hall, Sayles Café, Weitz Café, and Schulze Café), as well as self-serve kitchen areas and break rooms. A continuous service model and to-go options will be utilized in the dining halls to limit congestion at mealtimes. In addition, the GET Food app will provide options for mobile ordering.

The modified occupancy information for food service areas is broken down into food preparation, food sales/service, and seating areas.

Modified occupancy for food preparation areas is the number of people who can work in the area at the same time while maintaining at least six feet of physical distancing. Bon Appetit, our dining partner, has corporate planners who are knowledgeable about kitchen functions and movement around the kitchen and have determined a food preparation plan for their operations.

Modified occupancy for food sales/service areas

- Queueing and wayfinding signage have been installed where consumers order/select/pick up their meals.

Modified occupancy for seating areas is based on the number of chairs available when tables are placed at least six feet apart with no more than two chairs per table.

- Before and after eating, wash hands thoroughly to reduce the potential transmission of the virus.
- Bon Appetit has established requirements to allow at least six feet of distance between each diner, including both lines and seating arrangements.

- In order to preserve physical distancing, somewhat more limited dine-in seating will be available. In good weather, you may also eat at the outdoor tables. Please remember to maintain six feet of distance between you and others. Individuals should not sit facing one another directly while eating.
- Wear your mask or face covering until you are ready to eat and then replace it afterward. Put on masks when leaving tables to move around the dining location.
- There will be more to-go options as well. To limit physical interactions while purchasing food, there will be an expanded grab and go program of hot and cold items for all meals as well as snacks.
- Traffic lanes, signage, and graphics facilitate safe movement and spacing. When you enter college dining locations, you will see circle stickers on the ground showing where to stand.
- Shared items – utensils, dispensers, etc. – have largely been removed.
- Sanitizing stations have been increased.
- Occupancy limits will be posted and monitored.

Employee Break Rooms

- Physical distancing should be maintained in any break rooms or other shared or common spaces.
- The use of shared utensils for serving food, etc., is discouraged.
- Departments should remove or rearrange chairs and tables or add visual cue marks in employee break rooms to support physical distancing practices between employees. Wipe all surfaces, including tables, refrigerator handles, microwave oven controls, etc. after using in common areas.
- Self-serve cleaning products will be provided for this purpose by custodial services.

Fitness and Athletic Facilities

The fitness and athletic facilities will be available to faculty, staff and students. Maximum capacity numbers will be posted for each facility. If a facility is at capacity, users will need to wait until others leave. Carleton IDs will be REQUIRED for entry to any athletic facility. Priorities will be to continue to offer as many virtual options as possible for Recreation Programming with the possibility of advancing to a Hybrid model. We will teach and program activity opportunities outdoors as a priority. For all activity classes we recommend participants come dressed for their activity to eliminate congestion in locker rooms and rest rooms. Lockers have been blocked off to maintain physical distancing. Activities requiring close contact, such as spotting weights, will be prohibited.

- Masks are required at all times with the exception of during a cardio workout and swimming. No mask, no entry.
- All users must maintain a six-foot physical distance while in the facility.
- Hand sanitizing required on the way in and the way out.
- Cardio equipment reservations required. Information on how to reserve cardio equipment will be forthcoming. Workouts will be limited to max of 45 minutes, all starting on the hour. Machines will be cleaned the last 15 minutes of each hour, fitness center staff. However, we require the equipment user to wipe down equipment before and after use.
- Lifting to be done as an individual, in a safe/weight-appropriate manner. No spotting permitted.
- Wipe down free weights, dumbbells, and other equipment immediately after use and place in the “To be cleaned” tub.

- A Supplemental Cleaning Plan has been developed in consultation with Custodial Services for all PEAR Facilities.
- Equipment less than six feet apart has been removed or marked off.

Restrooms (academic)

- Please follow social distancing guidelines and maintain at least six feet of distance in restrooms.
- If you can't maintain at least six feet of distance inside restrooms, please wait outside rather than inside in order to maintain social distancing.
- At queuing areas, signs will be posted with the occupancy limit.
- Signage will be posted with instructions for 20-second hand washing.
- Wash your hands thoroughly afterward to reduce the potential transmission of the virus.

Campus Water, Water Fountains, and Bottle Fillers

- Campus water fountains that are high-touch items have been taken offline.
- Touch-free bottle-filling stations are available in many locations across campus as an alternative to traditional water fountains.
- The campus water supply is safe and tested regularly per requirements. Care has been taken in low-use buildings to assure that the water supply and sewer systems are properly maintained.

College Service Vehicles, Golf Carts, and Fleet Vehicles

- Require disinfection upon entering and exiting the vehicle.
- For vehicles with one seating row:
 - Trips of 15 minutes or fewer may include the driver and one passenger. Occupants must wear a cloth face covering.
 - Trips of more than 15 minutes are restricted to the driver only.
- Vehicles with multiple rows of seating are limited to one person per row. Occupants must wear a cloth face covering.

Library

- Queuing areas have been designated and plexiglass shields will be placed at service points.
- No food is allowed in the building.
- Library users need to disinfect their study space when arriving and leaving. Disinfectant supplies will be available.
- Physical magazines and newspapers will not be available.
- Consultations (reference inquires, instruction, etc.) will be virtual whenever possible.
- Library users must wash their hands before entering the stacks to retrieve books for checkout.
- Seating will be reduced and spaced six feet apart. Signage indicates to library users that no furniture, including chairs at tables may be moved.
- Group study participants must observe six-foot physical distancing.
- Study rooms will be limited to access/numbers of persons allowed at a time. As cleaning between patrons during the day will be limited, those using study rooms should use self-serve cleaning supplies available to disinfect as needed.
- The Athenaeum will be closed to public programming.

- Wide stairwells are two-way with signs encouraging traffic to “Keep Right.” Narrow stairwells are one-way only with signs indicating “Up Only” or “Down Only.”
- “Community” supplies, including pens/pencils, staplers and whiteboards will not be available.
- Entrance and exit doors are clearly marked.
- Entry to the library is restricted to students, faculty and staff.
- Occupancy limits will be posted and monitored.