

# Q and A - Lee University Fall Semester 2020 Plans

This document was last updated on August 7, 2020. On August 12, the Lee University COVID-19 Task Force released the *Return to Campus Guide*. The guide is inclusive of the information below, along with updates and additions. Please refer to the *Return to Campus Guide* for the latest information on policies, procedures, and general questions about Lee's plan for a safe, fall 2020 re-opening.

## Return to Campus Guide

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 has changed college life everywhere. After a spring and summer of Zoom classes, Lee University is preparing to welcome students back to campus this month for the fall semester.

The fall semester will require adjustments for all of us. Our commitment is to place our highest priority on the health and safety of our students and staff. We believe we can do that while still providing the special "Lee experience" which makes our university such an attractive choice for thousands of students each year.

Many questions have been asked by students, staff, faculty, parents, neighbors and friends as to what life will look like at Lee in the fall of 2020. Our COVID-19 Task Force, and others on Lee's administrative team, have worked tirelessly to envision a safe and successful semester on Lee's campus and to create an exhaustive set of policies that will be in place to achieve that.

Many decisions have already been made, and others will be made as we get closer to the start of classes. These decisions are made with guidance from CDC and Tennessee Department of Health, and this information is fluid, subject to change, and will be updated intermittently.

Rather than issuing multiple policies all at once, we hope this summary, in the form of a set of common questions and answers, will outline our policies and inform our constituents in the most efficient way. Naturally, other questions will arise here, and we welcome you to ask these questions. We encourage you to direct them through the following means:

- Students and parents - [studentfeedback@leeuniversity.edu](mailto:studentfeedback@leeuniversity.edu)
- Lee personnel – please contact your immediate supervisor
- Lee University alumni - [alumni@leeuniversity.edu](mailto:alumni@leeuniversity.edu)
- Neighbors in our community – [communityrelations@leeuniversity.edu](mailto:communityrelations@leeuniversity.edu)
- Media and any other constituents not listed above – [publicrelations@leeuniversity.edu](mailto:publicrelations@leeuniversity.edu)

## Fall Semester (general):

### Are we coming back in the Fall?

Yes. We are planning in-person classes with appropriate modifications to ensure the safety of our students and faculty. Classes will begin as previously scheduled on Wednesday, August 19.

**Will the Fall semester be in person or online? Will it be a mix?**

We are planning a full slate of in-person classes this fall, but all classes will also be equipped with Zoom as a “hybrid” alternative in order to accommodate students and faculty who cannot attend in person. Students who need to attend virtually for the semester or during specific periods of time during the semester – due to illness, quarantine, or other approved conditions – will need to secure approval by completing a petition which they may obtain from their Dean or the Office of the Provost.

In order to accommodate the increased time required for cleaning/sanitizing and movement between classes, breaks between class schedules will be lengthened to fifteen minutes. The following class schedule will be implemented for this purpose, with new start and end times listed next to the originally scheduled time slot. Students are encouraged to view their schedule for specific section start and end times prior to arriving in August.

<b>MWF</b>	<b>New start</b>	<b>New end</b>	<b>T/TH</b>	<b>New start</b>	<b>New end</b>
8:00-8:50	8:00	8:50	7:45-9:00	7:45	9:00
9:00-9:50	9:05	9:55	9:10-10:25	9:15	10:30
10:00-10:50	10:10	11:00	CHAPEL		
11:00-11:50	11:15	12:05	11:45-1:00	11:45	1:00
12:00-12:50	12:20	1:10	1:10-2:25	1:15	2:30
1:00-1:50	1:25	2:15	2:35-3:50	2:45	4:00
2:00-2:50	2:30	3:20	4:00-5:15	4:15	5:30
3:00-3:50	3:35	4:25			
4:00-4:50	4:40	5:30			

  

<b>Evening Classes</b>	<b>New start</b>	<b>New end</b>
5:00-8:00	5:45	8:45
6:00-8:50	6:00	8:50

**Do students get discounts for taking classes over Zoom?**

Because Zoom classes will provide the same high-quality lectures you would have in-person, there will be no discount. Our faculty is working hard to prepare and deliver instruction in the hybrid format in a way that maintains the quality of the experience, while also maintaining office hours and regular advising appointments so that a student who is not able to be on site will receive the full value for their tuition that they would in person.

**Some other schools are planning to wrap up their Fall semester by Thanksgiving. Is Lee planning to do the same?**

Yes. Lee will observe a new fall schedule, which will allow students to complete their classes by Wednesday, Nov. 25. When students and faculty leave campus for the Thanksgiving weekend, they will not need to return until Jan. 12, 2021, for the spring semester. Many universities have switched to this schedule to lessen exposure following the holiday break. To accomplish this change in the fall semester

calendar without loss of class days, the fall break, originally scheduled for mid-October, will be canceled. Winter Commencement is still scheduled to take place December 11-12.

**Do students have to move their stuff out of the dorms prior to Thanksgiving?**

No. We plan to allow students who will return for spring classes to leave their belongings in place over the Christmas break.

**Will there still be events and activities other than class (Chapel, Athletics, Theatre performances, Global Perspectives/study abroad, ensembles, etc.)?**

Yes, absolutely. We are currently discussing each of these areas in order to provide a full slate of activities and experiences to our students while also maintaining appropriate safety precautions. At this time, we are determining what changes need to be made to safely conduct chapels, recitals and performances, club and social gatherings, varsity athletic events and practices, intramural sports and recreation, study abroad trips, and dozens of other such extracurricular activities that make up the Lee experience.

Required chapel attendance for students will continue, but on a significantly altered basis to ensure that no crowds will meet which exceed safe distancing guidelines. A live service will be held in the Conn Center Tuesday and Thursday and will be streamed to Dixon, the Chapel, Pangle Hall, and Squires Recital Hall. Viewing groups in lecture halls and classrooms will also be available. Chapel speakers are already lined up.

Since musical ensembles (choirs and bands) are so important at Lee, we are paying close attention to the guidelines which are currently being developed by the National Association of Schools of Music for the safe conduct of musical groups. Our music faculty is developing a set of "best practices" which will keep students in musical ensembles safe as they rehearse. No travel will take place through October 15, at which point we will review the virus's current status and see if travel can be allowed for ensembles. Induction and tap night can be kept as long as they are done safely—masks, sanitation, and distancing are required.

Guidelines for athletics are being developed by the NCAA, and will apply to Lee as to all of college athletics. These policies will likely vary considerably depending on the particular sport involved.

**What about Global Perspectives requirements for students graduating in December?**

To complete the cross-cultural course requirement in Lee's General Education Core, students typically choose a faculty-led international trip. Some may also take an independent travel experience. Unfortunately, current travel restrictions have limited possibilities for the fall. As a result, the university has been exploring alternative options for students. The Office of Global Perspectives is exploring a number of domestic possibilities, as well as a no-travel, online cross-cultural module specifically for the fall semester. Any December graduates should be able to meet their requirement with one of these choices. These options will be made available once they are approved by the Global Perspectives Committee. The GP Office will send a survey to all seniors to gather information about their preferences and will work with each student one-on-one to ensure they can meet the requirement this semester if they have not already done so. Academic administrators will be flexible in allowing students to complete requirements after graduation ceremonies should it prove absolutely necessary. The hope is that travel

restrictions will loosen over the coming year, allowing many of the traditional established trips to resume for the summer. A health screening is always required prior to student travel. This semester, adherence to additional health precautions on campus and at the destination site will also be expected.

### **How will New Student Orientation be adjusted?**

We are retooling New Student Orientation (NSO) to fit with current CDC and Tennessee Department of Health guidelines. New students moving into residence halls will be able to do so at designated times between August 12-14. NSO will take place beginning on August 14, but we will have activities for students who have to move in earlier than expected. New students can expect more specific directions from the Office of Residential Life and Housing.

### **How can we prepare for the semester before Move-In Day? What about parent orientation?**

Everything needed to get ready for fall semester can be done online. To keep our students and families safe and healthy, we won't be hosting any official in-person events on campus for parents and families. However, we will be providing a short list of activities students and families can do within Cleveland and the surrounding area before they leave.

### **Is there a possibility that Lee will close during the fall semester?**

Many schools and businesses have varying ways to determine the conditions necessary to reopen and the threshold at which they would need to close again. We have been able to secure a place wherein students can quarantine during the semester. The capacity of our quarantine space will be one important variable to the question of shutdown, as will the number of confirmed cases. Naturally we are planning with the assumption that symptoms will appear. But daily screening, temperature checks, masks, social distancing, and other precautions, testing those with likely exposure, contact tracing, and quarantine procedures will all be utilized in order to limit COVID-19's spread. These measures will be taken and monitored constantly to get a picture of how faithfully the Lee family is following the guidelines and how effectively they are preventing an outbreak. If the Task Force determines that this can no longer be done safely with students living on campus, then the decision may be made to close the campus again. The Task Force is also considering contingencies for temporary closures (not the remainder of the semester) or spot/location closures to continue broader operations while a particular area of campus is closed. We would not be re-opening if we did not believe safe, in-person operations can be accomplished. So we are entering the fall semester with optimism, but with a sincere plea for all of our campus community to take these precautions seriously, if not for their own health and safety, and that of others, then simply so that the incidence of exposure is minimal and the semester can go forward as planned.

### **How safe is Cleveland, Tennessee?**

Cleveland is the county seat of Bradley County, which has a population of just over 110,000. As of August 6, in Bradley County there have been 15,254 tests administered with 86% negative results, for a total confirmed case count of 1,771, of which 1,249 are confirmed recovered. There have been 12 fatalities since the crisis began in March. After remaining very low in April and May, the rate of new cases in the county saw increase in June and July, creating a greater sense of caution and concern in the local area. There is no mask mandate in Bradley County, though many establishments are requiring

them. Crowds are limited to 50 people unless "social distancing" can be provided. You can check this statistical information on an ongoing basis by visiting the Tennessee Department of Health at <https://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/ncov.html>.

## **COVID-19 Precautions:**

**What are the new health protocols for the Fall semester? What safety procedures does Lee plan to implement when we return?**

A Lee University COVID-19 Task Force has been meeting weekly since March 12. This group has developed a set of guidelines with respect to social distancing, masks, gathering sizes, daily use of a health screening app for students and employees, informational signage, quarantine contingencies, and testing protocol. The basic guidelines are as follows:

**Social Distancing:** We have calculated the number of seats available in each of our 110 classrooms, following the CDC “safe distancing” guidelines, and we will limit occupancy to those levels. To do so, some classroom schedules, for students and for faculty, will need to be revised, and those changes are currently underway.

We are reviewing the capacity, floor or seating area, and purpose of every other space on our campus in order to manage how many people can safely occupy any space for its given purpose. We intend to only hold classes or events in areas where participants can comply with the current guidelines, and we will arrange seating to see that these guidelines are met. Furthermore, foot traffic into and out of buildings will be limited with exterior doors designated for entrance only or exit only.

**Masks:** Students, faculty, and other employees will be required to wear masks in any setting in which they are with other people and social distancing cannot be guaranteed. Thus, all are advised to bring their own mask to campus, to suit their preferences in style, type, and comfort. The university has secured tens of thousands of disposable masks and will make them available where they are needed. The mask requirement does not apply to students within their own dormitory rooms. Specific exceptions/adjustments to this policy will be considered on a case-by-case basis as the semester proceeds.

**Gathering Sizes:** The actual size limitations to gatherings will be largely based on the Tennessee maximum in force at any given time. The latest executive order limits social and recreational gathering sizes to no more than 50 individuals unless appropriate social distancing can be maintained.

**Daily Health Screening Tool:** We have built a health screening tool into the existing Lee Mobile app that allows students and employees to self-assess, notifies Health Services of individuals experiencing COVID-19-related symptoms, and shows a clearance notification that will be required to enter non-residential buildings on campus. This clearance is represented by a green background on the mobile device, hereafter described as a “green screen” or “green virtual card.” Students will use this 20-second app each day.

**Signage:** The university will provide signage on campus and in facilities to help encourage safe practices and remind students, employees and visitors of relevant guidance.

**Temperature checks:** Fever and other symptoms are self-reported through the Health Screening Tool. Temperature checking stations will be located at the entrance of most academic buildings, and additional high-volume temperature checking stations will be in various locations across campus, including Walker Arena, the PCSU, and the School of Business.

**Quarantine:** If a member of the campus community experiences symptoms that warrant a COVID-19 test, they will be required to quarantine until they are confirmed to be non-communicable. On-campus students will be provided a safe place to quarantine, if needed, until cleared by campus health officials.

**Testing protocol:** Lee students and employees will be asked to complete the Health Screening Tool upon their initial arrival to campus and each day after to enter campus facilities. If the screening tool indicates possible COVID-19 infection, further screening, possibly including a viral test, will be administered by the Health Services staff at our on-campus Health Clinic. Viral testing at the campus clinic will be free of charge. At this time, mandatory nasal swab testing of everyone prior to returning to campus will not be required. The health clinic will handle cases, quarantine, and communication with parents. They will also work with the task force to keep the campus community informed of exposure risk as appropriate while protecting the privacy of individuals. Students will have designated seating in classrooms so that, should there be cases, we can make students aware if those nearest them have potential exposure.

**Cleaning/Sanitizing:** Plans are in place for Lee's custodial department to clean and sanitize buildings and gathering locations thoroughly each day. In addition, every classroom and gathering space will be equipped with disinfecting wipes and/or spray, where students and employees will be disinfecting workspaces before each use. Breaks between class schedules will be lengthened to fifteen minutes to accommodate the increased time required for cleaning/sanitizing and movement between classes.

#### **Will Campus Ride be Operational this semester?**

Yes, Campus Ride will run this fall with the following guidelines. Whomever decides to ride must wear a mask and participate with social distancing. They will also be required to show they are "clear" or "green" on the health screening tool to the driver before they enter the bus. The busses will have partitions in place to shield them from the driver and vice versa. At the end of each day the bus will be thoroughly cleaned.

## **Housing:**

#### **Are we still on schedule for the August 14th move-in date?**

Yes. We are spacing out check-in to our residence halls to ensure safety of residents and families. Students were sent an email allowing them to sign-up for a designated move-in time. New students will move in on August 12, 13, and 14. Returning students will move in on August 15, 16, and 17. Each student will be allowed two additional persons to assist in the move-in process during their designated time.

### **Will on-campus dorm/apartment capacity be lowered in the Fall?**

Capacity will not be lowered for the fall. According to current guidelines, we can safely accommodate two students to a room in traditional residence halls and four to an apartment. We will maximize spaces between beds.

### **How will life in the dorms change to prevent the spread of COVID-19?**

Arrangement of dorm furniture prior to check-in will maximize distance between residents in rooms. Rearrangement of dorm rooms by occupants will be limited or prohibited to maintain these safe distancing standards. Kitchens in non-apartment style dorms will be available on a reservation system, but other group rooms will be closed. Hand sanitizer and other sanitization supplies will be made available in each hall. Increased cleaning and other strategies will be implemented to limit exposure in community bathroom/shower areas. One-way traffic patterns will be instituted for entry/exit and within the residence halls. Video will be implemented for regular room and curfew checks. Access to dorms and residential buildings will be restricted to residents only.

### **Am I allowed to go home on the weekends?**

Yes. Students will be asked to complete the self-screening tool upon return. If self-screening indicates COVID-19 symptoms, students will be referred to the Health Services for further screening.

### **What if my roommate gets sick? What will I have to do?**

Students in residence halls experiencing COVID-19 symptoms will be tested at our Health Clinic and provided a safe location for quarantine while awaiting test results. Students with COVID-19 will be isolated and all residents who had recent close contact with them will also be tested and quarantined. For students in on-campus housing and on the meal plan who are quarantined/isolated related to COVID-19 exposure and symptoms, a meal service plan has been worked out with Sodexo.

### **How will room checks be handled?**

Housing staff will conduct two room checks per month. One will be virtual. The virtual room check will consist of an RA contacting the student via Zoom or FaceTime, whichever the student prefers. The second one will be in person, but the RAs will be coordinating this so that they are spread out throughout the month (meaning they are not going room to room on one night), and students can choose not to be in the room.

## **Food services:**

### **Does Sodexo have its own plan for serving students safely?**

Sodexo operates globally and has immense experience safely serving guests in COVID-affected countries, including China. Through this they have developed corporate procedures for maintaining the safest possible means of feeding campus residents and are already implementing these strategies. They will follow CDC and Tennessee Health Department guidelines along with other best-practices in this

service. Masks must be worn when entering food facilities, but can be taken off when seated at the table. At the cafeteria, Sodexo staff will prepare a pre-made meal upon order. They will also refill drinks, since students aren't permitted to visit the drink machines themselves. Retail dining services will require a green virtual card before you are allowed to enter. Sodexo will all be providing ordering via its online app to promote safety and are adding contactless payment options such as Apple Pay.

### **What dining venues will be open?**

The Deacon Jones Dining Hall and all retail venues will be open in the fall. We will provide a safe place for students to eat. While precautions will be put in place to ensure student safety, the food and menu quality will remain high. To reduce gathering sizes in the Deacon Jones Dining Hall, students will be allowed to obtain a complete meal using one "meal swipe" at all our retail locations. Hours will also be extended in order to avoid crowding at any meal service.

### **When will dining venues open?**

Eating venues will be open across campus as soon as students begin arriving on August 12.

### **What precautions will be established to ensure student safety in dining venues?□**

Social distancing controls will be put in place for lines, seating, and for food services employees. Self-serve options will be eliminated at all dining locations. Grab-and-go options, order ahead/pickup options and seating reduction will reduce density of dining locations and lines. Seating will be eliminated in some retail locations where distancing is not feasible. Contactless options will be used at point of sale and check in areas to reduce person-to-person contact and wait times. Frequency of cleaning and sanitization of dining areas will be substantially increased. Food service will transition to disposable plates, containers, and utensils.

### **How will students in quarantine eat?**

Sodexo will bring food to any students who are on the meal plan and in quarantine. Any quarantined students not already on a school meal plan can contact Residential Life and Housing to discuss food options available.

## **Personal Responsibility:**

### **How will Lee educate its students on the protocols and the importance of compliance?**

Lee faculty and staff will be prepared to operate under the new guidelines, to inform students of the precautions in place, and to encourage them to remember that they are part of a campus community with a diverse population, regardless of their own personal perception of vulnerability. Reminders of such will also be included in all class syllabi and posted on campus and in university facilities. Students will be asked to pledge their commitment to responsible citizenship, already a core value at Lee, and a value we feel includes a group effort to slow the spread of COVID-19.

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