

CAMPUS GUIDELINES

SPRING 2021



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ATHENS.EDU/GUIDELINES

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ATHENIANS CONTINUE TO BE RESILIENT

Dear Colleagues,

As we approach the end of another successful semester, I continue to be encouraged by the relatively low number of positive cases that have been reported among faculty, staff, and students. I feel these results are directly related to our joint efforts with the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH), the on-campus protocols that we have put in place, and the continuing efforts of everyone on campus adhering to social distancing guidelines and wearing face coverings. I applaud your diligence and perseverance in these difficult times.

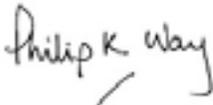
On Monday, January 11, 2021, we will begin our spring semester in much the same manner as the current one including the following:

- We will continue with the gate screening procedures including the use of the Healthcheck app.
- Sentinel testing will resume after the holiday break.
- As opposed to re-entry testing we will do enhanced sentinel testing at the beginning of the spring semester based on advice from UAB.

Recent news concerning the effectiveness and safety of new vaccines is encouraging. We are hopeful that distribution will begin soon and that everyone takes advantage of a vaccine. Then we can finally put COVID-19 behind us and move forward with an optimal mix of online and in-person education.

In closing, keep up the good work, and I wish you all a safe and happy Spring Semester.

Sincerely,



Philip Way, Ph.D.
President

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 1 The safety and well-being of our faculty, staff, students, and the Athens community is of utmost importance.**
- 2 We will continue to model our approach on all federal, state, and local guidelines, including Centers for Disease Control recommendations for Higher Education, and take advantage of GuideSafe™ resources provided by the State and UAB.**
- 3 We aim to maintain the quality of our academic offerings and provide course delivery options and resources that meet the needs of all constituencies.**
- 4 We will make sound business decisions that ensure the long-term success of Athens State University.**



PRIOR TO THE SPRING 2021 SEMESTER

We are excited to welcome students to the Spring 2021 semester! This semester, Athens State will continue using the GuideSafe™ program in partnership with the Alabama Department of Public Health and The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB).

WEB-BASED TRAINING

- The web-based training “COVID-19: Basic Safety and Awareness Course” is available in Blackboard to inform you about COVID-19 awareness and campus health and safety requirements.
- New students who are taking classes on-campus should complete the training course before the semester begins.
- Employees and students must fully comply with policies, practices, and protocols.

SELF-SCREENING: ATHENS-STATE HEALTHCHECK

- “Athens-State Healthcheck” is a COVID-19 assessment tool for employees and students to report the existence of any current COVID-19-related symptoms, exposure history, and testing history.
- The assessment tool consists of a set of questions that measures symptoms and exposure to COVID-19.
- The initial survey takes 20 seconds to complete.
- Subsequent surveys take 10 seconds to complete.
- If you have symptoms, contact your healthcare provider and notify your supervisor or appropriate school official. Do not come to work or report to campus.
- Athens State requires employees and students to complete the assessment at least every three days. You will automatically receive email and text reminders if you have not completed the assessment within the three-day time period.
- Employees and students are encouraged to complete Athens-State Healthcheck daily.



- Visit [ATHENS.EDU/HEALTHCHECK](https://athens.edu/healthcheck) to complete the Athens-State Healthcheck.
- Log-in using your Athens State University email address and password.
- After answering the short survey, choose “Get My Passport.”
- Show this passport to the attendant at the gate to enter campus.

CAMPUS OPERATIONS

CAMPUS ENTRY

CAMPUS ACCESS POINTS

- All students, faculty, and staff entering campus must proceed through the entrances on Hobbs Street or Beaty Street, even if they work at a location off the central campus.
- The Hobbs Street entrance will be open from 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM Monday through Thursday and from 7:00 AM – 5:00 PM on Friday. The Beaty Street entrance will be open from 7:00 AM – 5:00 PM Monday through Friday. The Hobbs Street gate will be open on weekends ONLY when classes or events are scheduled.
- Students, faculty, and staff should check with Campus Security near the Beaty Street entrance if entering the campus during times other than previously mentioned. A map showing the location of the Security Office, along with designated building entrances, is provided below for your convenience.
- Protocols in this document should be followed by off-site locations when practical and if not superseded by protocols established for a specific location by the host institution or organization. For specific locations such as AMSTI, CLL, and ACA, separate or additional guidelines may supplement or supersede guidelines in this document.



CAMPUS OPERATIONS

CAMPUS ENTRY

SCREENING PROTOCOLS

- All should present student or employee ID to Security at the gates.
- Proof of a current Athens-State Healthcheck self-screening must also be provided by sharing the screen of a smartphone or tablet, a printout, or other form of proof that shows name, date, and result of the Athens-State Healthcheck screening.
- For individuals and visitors who do not have the Athens-State Healthcheck screening capability, Security will ask a series of questions and check temperatures using a thermal no-touch thermometer.
- Anyone with a temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or above and/or does not pass COVID-19 screening questions will not be granted access to the campus.

WRISTBANDS

- All individuals accessing campus will be given a wristband that must be worn at all times.
- Each day will have a color and pattern assigned that is unique for that day.

BUILDING ENTRANCES

- When feasible, each building will have a designated entrance identified with signage. A map identifying designated entrances is provided on the previous page. Flyers will also be available at the entrance points onto campus.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided at all of the designated entrances.

PARKING

- Parking will be required inside the access points to campus for faculty, staff, students, and visitors having class, working, or conducting business within the perimeter of the main campus. For those who need to access buildings and offices on the perimeter of campus, they must be screened at the Beaty Street entrance and proceed to their destination.

BUILDING PROTOCOLS

CLASSROOMS

- Classrooms will be configured to accommodate social distancing guidelines. Class enrollments are being monitored to provide for limited occupancy.
- Where practical, directional arrows will be used for ease of flow and distancing.
- Disinfectant supplies will be provided for all labs. Classrooms will be thoroughly cleaned daily, and disinfectant misters will be used in each classroom between class offerings.

HALLWAYS & STAIRWAYS

- All students, faculty, staff, and visitors are asked to walk to the right of the hallways to maintain one direction flow of traffic.
- Students are encouraged to wait outside or in vehicles until close to class time to prevent congestion in hallways before class. Students who do wait inside hallways and buildings should maintain six feet of physical separation or wear a face covering.



CAMPUS OPERATIONS

BUILDING PROTOCOLS

RESTROOMS

- The use of restrooms should be limited based on size to ensure at least six feet between individuals.
- Washing hands thoroughly after restroom usage will help prevent potential transmission of germs.

ELEVATORS

- Usage of campus elevators should be limited to one person at a time. If more than one individual must access an elevator, a face covering should be worn by all individuals.
- Hand sanitizer should be used immediately upon using an elevator.

WORK AREAS, COMMON SPACES & MEETINGS

- Employees should maintain at least six feet separation from co-workers. Face coverings should be worn while in shared workspaces when social distancing cannot be maintained or when co-workers request them.
- When possible, doors to private offices should be closed.
- Employees should consider alternative approaches when activities require close interaction, such as using Zoom for meetings.
- As non-essential travel is suspended for the Spring 2021 semester (unless approved by the appropriate Vice President and/or designee), online attendance at meetings is encouraged where available.

FACULTY OFFICE HOURS

- Important aspects of the return to campus plan include social distancing and face coverings. Due to size constraints in many University offices, Faculty are encouraged to meet with students virtually during regularly scheduled office hours. In circumstances that require in-person meetings, it is recommended that alternative areas are identified for such meetings that would allow for social distancing. Decisions relating to virtual office hours should be made in coordination with the Dean of each college.

CAMPUS SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

SENTINEL TESTING & POSITIVE RESULTS

- In accordance with the GuideSafe™ program, through UAB, Athens State University will arrange for voluntary random testing of groups of students, faculty, and staff who have returned to campus and who may not exhibit symptoms but may be carriers (asymptomatic).
- If faculty, staff, or students test positive for COVID-19, they will not be allowed on campus until they are released to return to school/work in accordance with CDC guidelines or their healthcare provider. Further, the University will follow contact tracing protocols and inform those who have been in close contact with tailored instructions of next steps.
- Faculty will be notified that a student will be absent from class, with a specific return to school date provided. Due to HIPAA regulations, specific medical information is protected and cannot be shared.



CAMPUS SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

EXPOSURE NOTIFICATION

- As part of the GuideSafe™ program, UAB, in conjunction with the Alabama Department of Public Health, has developed a proximity/contact tracing application that individuals can use to report a positive test result and anonymously notify other individuals with whom the person with the positive test result has been in proximity and may have been exposed to the virus.
- The benefit of downloading and using the application is that it will help improve tracing efforts to reduce the spread of the virus. You can download the “GuideSafe” app in your phone’s app store.
- Use of the application is voluntary but strongly encouraged.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Social distancing is one of the best tools to avoid exposure to the COVID-19 virus and to help slow its spread. It is important to maintain at least six feet of separation from other students, faculty, and staff at all times.
- Any individual who does not maintain proper social distancing should be asked to leave. Campus Security can assist with having these individuals removed from campus.
- Staggering work hours, with permission from the supervisor, can also reduce the likelihood of close contact with others at the start and end of the work day.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

- Students will be required to wear face coverings during all class meetings. Face coverings may be either a cloth, 3-ply face mask, gaiter, or clear face shield that serves as a protective isolation mask.
- Reasonable accommodations may be allowed for individuals unable to meet this requirement by contacting our ADA officer, Juliana Hunt, for assistance at Juliana.Hunt@athens.edu or (256) 233-8143. Faculty may teach without a face covering so long as they are able to distance themselves a minimum of six feet. Plexiglass-type barriers or face shields may also be used.
- Face coverings should be worn if you cannot maintain social distancing guidelines at all times.
- Cloth face coverings should be washed every day.
- If you do not have a face covering/mask, one may be obtained at the Athens State Security office or at the entry checkpoints to campus.

HANDWASHING & HAND SANITIZERS

- All employees and students should wash their hands often and for at least 20 seconds each time. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Hand sanitizer stations have been strategically placed at multiple locations across campus for your convenience and safety.

ENHANCED CLEANING PROCEDURES

- ABM, the third-party vendor that provides janitorial services for Athens State, has enhanced their cleaning procedures with stringent cleaning and disinfecting protocols.



EMPLOYEE & STUDENT WELL-BEING

ACCOMMODATIONS

- Anyone having physical, emotional, or mental health risks or concerns should contact our ADA officer, Juliana Hunt, for assistance at Juliana.Hunt@athens.edu or (256) 233-8143.
- Human Resources is responsible for COVID-19-related reasonable accommodations, including flexible working arrangements and leave, under the ADA and FFCRA. The University website provides more details.
- Handicap parking is available on campus in front of and near campus buildings and is appropriately marked.

COUNSELING SERVICES

- A licensed professional counselor is available by appointment to discuss personal issues with currently-enrolled students and Athens State University faculty and staff on a brief-counseling basis.
- All counseling services are provided with your confidentiality in mind through a partnership with the Mental Health Center of North Central Alabama and are offered at no charge to you.
- Personal Counseling Services can help you:
 - Learn how to relax during stressful times.
 - Learn coping skills to deal with anxiety, depression, addictions, grief, or other emotions that might interfere with your daily life.
 - Locate mental health services, resources, and support groups in your local community.
- To make an appointment, please contact Lisa Philippart, LPC at Lisa.Philippart@athens.edu or (256) 233-8144.

SELF-CARE

- Take care of your emotional health and seek counseling services if needed. This will help you think clearly and react to the urgent needs to protect yourself and your family.
- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including those on social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
- Take care of your body:
 - Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate.
 - Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals.
 - Exercise regularly.
 - Get plenty of sleep.
 - Avoid alcohol and drug use.
- Make time to unwind and participate in activities you enjoy.
- Connect with others and talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.
- Connect with your community or faith-based organizations for support; while social distancing, consider connecting online, through social media, by phone, or by email.



COMMUNICATIONS & RESOURCES

COVID-19 CAMPUS GUIDELINES WEBSITE

- There are numerous updates, documents, and resources available on our website that provide expanded information on a variety of topics.
- Visit athens.edu/guidelines for the most up-to-date information.
- Below are useful resources on the COVID-19 Campus Guidelines website, along with links to the information.
- Please be aware that we are unable to communicate specific information about positive cases on campus that could result in potential HIPAA violations.

GUIDELINES & PROTOCOLS

- The most up-to-date version of these guidelines will be on the website, along with a quick reference of COVID-19 protocols at Athens State University.

ATHENS-STATE HEALTHCHECK & PASSPORT

- Information about the Athens-State Healthcheck app and accompanying Passport (which shows the actual “pass” to gain entry to campus) is included on the COVID-19 Campus Guidelines website.
- FAQs about the Healthcheck, including how it’s used and why it’s important, can also be found within the site.

COVID-19 TRAINING COURSE

- The web-based training “COVID-19: Basic Safety and Awareness Course” is linked from the primary landing page within the COVID-19 Campus Guidelines website.
- This training must be completed by new Spring 2021 students attending classes on-campus prior to the beginning of the semester.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- The COVID-19 Campus Guidelines website includes links to Frequently Asked Questions, including specific questions for students, faculty, and staff.

It is our goal to provide comprehensive information that is both pertinent and straightforward. We appreciate everyone’s feedback and recognize that necessary changes will need to be made, with updates provided to address future questions and concerns. These updates will be communicated through the COVID-19 Campus Guidelines website, email, and social media.

If you have specific questions that are not answered in this document or in our online resources, please email us at communications@athens.edu.





UPDATED 11/23/20