



SOUTH CAROLINA GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL
for Science & Mathematics

SPRING SEMESTER 2021

RETURN-TO-RESIDENCY

PLAN

INTRODUCTION

This *Return to Residency Plan* builds upon the *COVID-19 Framework & Operating Plan*. It incorporates what was learned during the fall semester to facilitate a safe return to residential operations and in-class instruction for the spring 2021 semester.

This plan supports:

1. Providing each family with the option to return students to the residence halls and in-class instruction or remain in the virtual learning environment for the spring semester.
2. Implementing CDC and DHEC compliant protocols for prevention, identification, and containment of COVID-19 infections.
3. Using the school's virtual instruction infrastructure to support students who choose to remain at home, or who are in quarantine or isolation at home.
4. Continuing assessment of circumstances surrounding COVID-19 and adaptation as needed.

The safety and well-being of the GSSM community remains the school's highest priority as it prepares to welcome its students back to campus. While continuing to meet our student's academic and developmental needs, campus operations will change and adapt as necessary to ensure a safe and effective teaching, learning, and working environment.

CALENDAR

- The spring semester schedule provides a residential experience with several entry points, which provides families and their students with the flexibility to return when they feel comfortable doing so. The spring semester plan begins with virtual instruction to allow for a self-quarantine period following the winter break. Students who choose to return to campus for the spring semester will report to GSSM near the end of January and remain on campus until spring break in mid-March.
- Following spring break, there will be another period of virtual instruction to allow for a self-quarantine period. Students will have the option of returning to campus for the remainder of the semester, which will include final exams, AP exams, and Interim.
- Seniors who elected virtual instruction for the spring semester may return to enjoy in-person graduation preparations at the end of the year.

Spring 2021 Calendar

January 4 th	Start of spring semester. All students remain virtual and self-quarantine at home.
January 24 th	Students begin moving into residence halls
January 25 th	In-person and virtual classes begin
March 12 th	Spring Break – students return home
March 22 nd	Classes resume. All students remain virtual and self-quarantine at home.
April 5 th	Students return and move-in if they did not return in January

April 6 th	In-person and virtual classes resume
April 26 th	Spring semester final exams begin
May 5 th	Interim is held using a modified schedule to accommodate the AP exam schedule from May 3 rd to May 14 th
May 19 th	Juniors move out of the residence halls
May 20 th	Seniors not already in residence may move into the residence halls
May 22 nd	Graduation

FACILITIES

Based on recommendations from CDC, DHEC, and in collaboration with MUSC's Back to Business initiative, steps are being taken to reduce opportunities for person-person transmission:

Reducing Transmission Via Shared Surfaces

- Additional personnel have been hired and assigned to an enhanced cleaning regimen, reducing surface transmissions by cleaning high-touch surfaces and sanitizing meeting rooms after use.
- New furniture that is easily cleaned has been ordered for common areas.
- Each classroom is equipped with sanitizing materials used at the end of class to clean touched surfaces prior to the room's next use.
- Residence halls and student rooms will be sanitized after the final fall residency in preparation for spring semester occupancy.
- Self-serve utensils have been removed from the Dining Hall. All food is served by staff or pre-packaged for pick-up and take out.
- Dining Hall tables are sanitized after each use.

Reducing Transmission Through the Air

- Commercial-grade ionizers are being installed in each of the 14 air handlers on campus to reduce potential viral load and prevent airborne spread.
- Air handlers are running continuously to maximize air exchange and reduce potential viral load.
- Dining Hall serving and seating configurations have been modified according to CDC guidelines.

Increasing Awareness and Screening

- Self-service infrared temperature scanning stations are located at the building's main entrances and are required to be used whenever staff, students, or visitors enter the building. Protocols for their use are posted prominently at each location.
- Reminders about the school's COVID-19 protocols are displayed regularly throughout the school's digital signage system located in prominent locations around campus and on regular postings on doors, walls and stands.

Additional measures to improve the efficiency and effective cleaning of classrooms and other spaces after use are being investigated.

RETURNING TO RESIDENCE

An entry protocol has been established for staff and students returning to campus in the spring. This protocol will also be observed when students return in January and after any break:

Prepare to return healthy

At least two weeks before residence halls open, students will be asked to take extra care to follow physical distancing guidelines (6-feet apart) within their home. This will include refraining from unnecessary travel outside the home, limiting visitation from non-family members, and complying with all CDC guidelines.

Provide evidence of health

Prior to or upon arrival, each student must present a negative COVID-19 test taken no more than 5 days prior to arrival on campus.

STAYING HEALTHY

The school's emphasis will be on practices that minimize opportunities for coronavirus to be brought onto campus and spread within the community. While in residence, students, faculty, and staff will observe the school's COVID-19 safety protocols:

Keeping each other safe

Students will wear approved masks and face coverings while indoors on campus. The only places that students can remove their masks are:

1. with roommates in their own residence hall room
2. while seated and eating in the dining hall
3. with permission from supervising staff during athletic activities

Physical distancing (6-feet apart) will be practiced in hallways, classrooms, and outdoors. Mask wearing is required when walking around Hartsville. Faculty and staff will follow the same guidelines for masking and physical distancing (6-feet apart).

Maintaining awareness and mutual responsibility

Using their phones and GSSM's REACH boarding management system, students will complete a daily survey regarding their health before leaving their assigned rooms. Students who report COVID-19 symptoms, or possible exposure to someone infected with the novel coronavirus, will receive instructions to report to health services for evaluation. The system alerts the health services staff automatically.

Each day, students will scan themselves at a self-service temperature scanner in the main lobby, or in health services when leaving the residence halls for the first time.

Sampling for assurance and early intervention

In partnership with Carolina Pines Regional Medical Center, an on-campus surveillance testing program for coronavirus infection will provide early identification of cases, allowing for effective contact tracing, isolation, and prevention of community spread of the virus. One third of the on-campus student population

will be tested each week using on-campus testing. On-campus employees will have the option to be tested on a regular basis.

Isolation and Quarantine

The health services staff will evaluate and test students who exhibit any of the symptoms of COVID-19 infection. If the student is COVID-19 positive, they will return home for treatment and recovery.

Students who are found to have been exposed to the novel coronavirus will return home immediately to quarantine based on DHEC quarantine policy. Contact tracing based on CDC/DHEC guidelines will identify students who need to return home.

Leaving Campus

Students leaving and returning to campus increase the risks to the campus community. Balancing this risk with students' emotional and developmental well-being is important and is the basis for off-campus leave and travel policies.

1. Students returning to residency in January will remain in residence until Spring Break begins on March 12th.
2. Students who must remain off campus overnight due to college visits or other unavoidable circumstances will isolate at home for five (5) days before returning to campus and repeat the Returning to Residence protocol.
3. Field trips will be restricted and will be approved with appropriate provisions for compliance with GSSM COVID-19 protocols.
4. Students will be required to wear masks when walking in Hartsville and when riding in GSSM vehicles.

CLASSES

Classes and labs will meet at their regularly scheduled times according to the daily schedule.

Course instruction will be delivered from the classroom or lab when conditions permit. Allowable conditions include:

- the size of the classroom or lab
- the ability to physically distance (6-feet apart) from each other
- the availability of the course's instructor to teach on campus
- unique course instructional considerations.

Keeping Classrooms Healthy

1. Housekeeping staff will clean and disinfect all classrooms and labs prior to the start of each day.
2. Classrooms that have equipment used daily by students, such as computer labs, science labs and the engineering labs, will be cleaned regularly throughout the day.
3. Students will sanitize their desks and workstations at the end of class using sanitizing wipes provided in each classroom.
4. Student and teachers will wear masks or approved face coverings and will practice physical distancing (6-feet apart) while in classrooms and labs.

Attendance

Student attendance, whether in-person, virtual at home, or virtual from an on-campus location is required and recorded.

Academic Support

Whether on campus or virtual, students will continue to receive academic support for their success and development.

- Tutoring Centers will operate virtually and in classrooms when it is possible to adhere to physical distancing guidelines (6-feet apart).
- Academic advising and faculty office hours will be conducted using virtual, classroom, or office space based on ability to adhere to physical distancing guidelines (6-feet apart).
- QUEST will apply to all residential students, while virtual QUEST for off-campus students will operate as it did in the fall.

RESIDENTIAL OUTREACH PROGRAMMING

Summer 2021 Programs

Planning for our three annual summer programs (GoSciTech, iTEAMS, and CREATEng) using an in-person delivery model has started. However, safety concerns and the uncertainty of partner school districts being able to provide us with day program locations may require the Outreach Center to place more weight on considering alternative models for delivery. Additional information and data are needed before final decisions are made.

Spring semester Programs

The annual academic year programs delivered during the spring semester that will continue to be discussed are:

- STEM Scholars (Academic Saturdays)
- After school programs (ENGAGE, SPARK)
- STEM Experiences @ GSSM
- STEAM Bus
- PASE
- ENGAGE (off-campus)
- STEM Events (P2P), School partnerships (day or night), & Festivals (Saturday)

COMMUNICATION

GSSM will continue to follow its current practice to communicate plans, schedules, and items of interest to students, staff, families, and others using email, social media, and its website. In compliance with DHEC reporting rules, information regarding campus COVID-19 infections and exposures will be provided promptly to the appropriate state offices and posted at least weekly on the school's website.

The health information of students and staff will be protected according to HIPAA and FERPA requirements.

MONITORING, ASSESSMENT, ADJUSTMENT

GSSM will continue to follow infection rates published by DHEC to monitor infection activity within Darlington County. When the DHEC two-week *cumulative incidence rate* or *percent positive rate* (metrics and categorizations can be found at the end of this section) reaches *HIGH* for Darlington County adjustments may be made to the calendar, schedule, and campus policies to minimize the risk to the campus community. Other relevant indicators besides the DHEC published rates may also be consulted.

In the event that community spread of COVID-19 is observed on campus, GSSM will consult with DHEC and local healthcare providers to contain the spread and prevent further community-acquired infections.

Metrics and Categorizations:

Two-week Incidence Rate: the number of new cases in the prior two weeks (October 15 – October 28, 2020) per 100,000 people. This metric provides the recent incidence of COVID-19 infections in that county.

Categorization (# cases/100,000 people):

Low: 0 – 50

Medium: 51 – 200

High: ≥ 201

Two-Week Percent Positive Rate: the percentage of individuals who tested positive out of the number of individuals tested with a molecular (swab, or PCR) test in the last two weeks for each county. The metric takes into consideration the number of tests performed for residents of the county in the previous two weeks.

Categorization:

Low: $\leq 5.0\%$

Medium: 5.1% - 9.9%

High: $\geq 10.0\%$