**Public Health Incident Task Force**

**University Events Working Group**

**Fall Re-opening Plan**

From being among the top 10 reasons students choose a college to being vital to maintaining persistence to graduation, events and activities are essential ingredients to successful recruitment, enrollment and retention.

While traditional face-to-face interaction is irreplaceable, COVID-19 requires us to be nimble in our planning and to make a serious, sustained commitment to integrating virtual experiences into our outreach, engagement and event programming, which will allow us to maintain our framework and presence today and improve our effectiveness long after the immediate threat is over.

Our objectives in developing this plan remain:

* Leveraging the significant role events play in the success of ODU's instruction, recruitment, enrollment and retention efforts – key to marketing ODU as Virginia's entrepreneurial-minded doctoral research university;
* Supporting recruitment, enrollment and retention;
* Advancing the requirements of our prestigious Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement;
* Engaging the community and delivering ODU’s message;
* Showcasing faculty research and expertise;
* Providing opportunities for community-based teaching, research, service, and student learning;
* Serving as a respected convener of ideas;
* Sharing educational resources for the campus and the communities we serve;
* Enriching valuable community partnerships, programs, and research-based solutions to community needs; and,
* Advancing our “institution that serves its students and **enriches the Commonwealth of Virginia, the nation, and the world** through rigorous academic programs, **strategic partnerships, and active civic engagement**.”

**Guiding Principles:**

As a public university in Virginia, our plans are driven by prevailing gathering restrictions and social distancing guidelines as established by the Commonwealth of Virginia and the CDC.

**Planning Scenarios:**

Experience to date suggests four broad planning scenarios:

1. Social distancing and a prohibition on gatherings of more than 10 (Phase 1 criteria)
2. Social distancing and a prohibition on gatherings of more than 50 (Phase 2 criteria)
3. Social distancing and a prohibition on gatherings of more than 250 (Phase 3 criteria)
4. Social distancing and removal of all gathering restrictions

We understand that these phases are fluid and that we may enter and leave various phases multiple times before the pandemic is no longer a threat. Understanding that our planning is based on circumstances and not dates will assist in making those movements as quickly and efficiently as possible.

In preparation for each planning scenario, we have completed the following:

* A hybrid event guide which directs our activities in planning events of 10+ attendees
* Adjusted speaker and performer contracts to reflect the change to or addition of a virtual platform (all contracts will be changed to include virtual platforms moving forward)
* An inventory of events for the 2020/2021 academic year in coordination with other groups engaged in similar planning, including:
	+ Anticipated date
	+ Audience(s) served
	+ Anticipated attendance
	+ Venue (indoor/outdoor)
	+ Possibility to hold event virtually if needed
	+ Venue capacity as affected by gathering limitations and social distancing and sanitation requirements
* A review of:
	+ Existing event management/scheduling procedure manuals for all indoor/outdoor events and venues
	+ Best practices for virtual and in-person events
* On-going:
	+ A webpage to highlight virtual events for maximum participation while avoiding oversubscription
	+ Identification of event technology to register and host virtual events and programming.
		- Alert attendees that their form of attendance (in-person/online) may change with little notice due to the dynamic nature of gathering restrictions.
		- Include in registration the University’s risk management guidelines which include specific requirements around advanced notification of campus visits, the wearing of masks and social distancing by visitors and the requirement for sanitizing resources in close proximity to event space.

* + Development of a marketing strategy to drive registration
	+ Assess existing event reservations and plans
		- Advise those whose fall events cannot be moved online that they will need to be rescheduled to Spring, pending relaxed gathering restrictions
		- Develop a reservation system for virtual events to alleviate oversubscription of audiences
		- Assess the feasibility of the remaining fall events to determine:
			* Which could be moved exclusively online
			* Which could be presented in a hybrid of in-person meetings and online platforms
		- Advise event planners of the University’s decisions about these fall events and their fluidity and work with them to transition events accordingly.

**Fall 2020 Assumption:**

We anticipate the University will open 15 August, that Fall Break will be eliminated and that the Fall semester will end before Thanksgiving break.

The University will continue to follow COVID-19 guidelines provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Virginia Department of Health and the Governor’s Office. Physical distancing and other recommended protective measures will be implemented across campus, including in event venues. Facilities will be cleaned and disinfected.

**Spring 2021 Assumption:**

We believe we should plan for the Spring semester with the expectation that some level of gathering restrictions will still be in place.

Because the three phases described by the Governor are built around circumstances and not dates, our plan is built around gathering restrictions as presently known.

**Here are our plans for the four gathering scenarios described above:**

1. (Phase 1 criteria) Social distancing and prohibition on gatherings of more than 10
	* **Activities and events restricted to students and faculty (non-athletic)**
* Defer to the Office of Student Engagement and Enrollment Services and the Provost’s office
	+ With any on-campus or in-person student instruction, providing safe engagement programs within the appropriate guidelines will be critical or providing students with an outlet of spending time outside the classroom.
	+ **Athletic events**
		- As permitted by the Commonwealth with guidance from the NCAA, CUSA, affiliated conferences and Chartway Arena, where appropriate
	+ **Campus-wide events to which the general public is typically invited**
		- Conduct all non-athletic/ campus-wide events virtually
		- We believe that with proper planning, marketing and execution, we have an opportunity to improve public engagement because we will engage audiences who have not traditionally opted to come to campus for events.
		- Moving events to the virtual space will allow us to stay on pace to meet the continuing requirements of the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement, which we worked five years to achieve.
1. (Phase 2 criteria) Social distancing and a prohibition on gatherings of more than 50
	* **Activities and events restricted to students and faculty (non-athletic)**
* Defer to the Office of Student Engagement and Enrollment Services and the Provost’s office.
	+ **Athletic events**
		- As permitted by the Commonwealth with guidance from the NCAA, CUSA, affiliated conferences and Chartway Arena, where appropriate.
	+ **Campus-wide events to which the general public is typically invited**
		- Evaluate events according to the hybrid event guide and in consultation with Risk Management.
1. (Phase 3 criteria) Social distancing and a prohibition on gatherings of more than 250
	* **Activities and events restricted to students and faculty (non-athletic)**
* Defer to the Office of Student Engagement and Enrollment Services and the Provost’s office.
	+ **Athletic events**
		- As permitted by the Commonwealth with guidance from the NCAA, CUSA, affiliated conferences and Chartway Arena, where appropriate.
	+ **Campus-wide events to which the general public is typically invited**
* Evaluate events according to the hybrid event guide and in consultation with Risk Management.

 (Phase 4 criteria) Social distancing and removal of all gathering restrictions

* + **Activities and events restricted to students and faculty (non-athletic)**
* As directed by the Office of Student Engagement and Enrollment Services and the Provost’s office.
	+ **Athletic events**
		- As directed by the Commonwealth with guidance from the NCAA, CUSA, affiliated conferences and Chartway Arena, where appropriate.
	+ **Campus-wide events to which the general public is typically invited**
		- Assure events are assigned to venues where proper socially distancing can be achieved.
		- Include virtual element in all events.
		- Retain provisional language in registration that gathering guidelines may change in a way that would affect their form of participation.