



September 29, 2021

To: The Wabash Community

From: President Scott Feller

Re: Masking Update,

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By the beginning of next week, we will achieve a new milestone: Over 95% of the student body will be more than two weeks past their second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. We have had no new cases of COVID-19 in our surveillance and symptomatic testing of students in the last two weeks, and [projections](#) are that cases in Indiana and Montgomery County will continue to decline over the next several weeks.

As a result of these favorable conditions, beginning on Monday, October 4 we will conduct a trial run of allowing instructors to choose whether masks are required during instructional activities such as classes, labs, and office hours. If there is evidence of classroom transmission of COVID-19, strain on the campus health care system due to other outbreaks on campus (get your flu shot!), concerning conditions in the broader community, or new guidance from public health authorities, we will resume masking. We also will plan to wear masks the week we return from Fall Break (week of October 18) as we reassess campus conditions.

All persons should continue to wear a mask in instructional settings until your instructor indicates otherwise. Faculty might consider many factors in their decision-making process about masking, including the nature of classroom activities, occupancy of the room, number of students in the class, students with high-risk health conditions, and personal risk factors. Students with conditions that put them at higher risk for COVID-19 complications or breakthrough infections should contact Heather Thrush at [thrushh@wabash.edu](mailto:thrushh@wabash.edu) to discuss options. As with all things related to COVID-19, there are no easy decisions, and faculty and staff decisions regarding masks should be respected.

Our other mitigation practices, including increased ventilation, wearing a mask off campus, good hand hygiene practices, and avoiding close contact, crowds, and confined spaces will continue. Monitoring your health each day and seeking care from the Student Health Center or your primary care provider remains one of the most crucial steps.

You are always welcome to wear a mask at any time in any location, and if someone else is wearing a mask, consider it an invitation to put on yours. And as always, any person who is not fully vaccinated against COVID-19 is REQUIRED to wear a mask any time they are inside College buildings and outside of their sleeping room.

For details regarding this updated guidance, please visit the [Important Documents page on our COVID-19 site](#). Achieving fully vaccinated campus status is a milestone to celebrate. I am grateful for everyone who helped bring us to this point. We are hopefully entering a new phase of the pandemic where some layers of protection that we have relied on can be [cautiously replaced](#) with more effective mitigation tools such as vaccination.

