

COVID-19 Safety for Houghton College



Returning Campus to a New Normal Houghton College

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1 INTRODUCTION

We have learned much about safely learning under COVID-19 after a successful 2020-21 academic year. By limiting our on-campus case numbers to only 43 and having no active cases in Houghton Buffalo or Houghton Utica, we were able to resume in-person classes, athletic competition, and hold an in-person Commencement ceremony for our spring 2021 graduates. Through the work of our Preparing a Residential Education Plan (PREP) Team, we feel confident in our ability to safely and responsibly prepare our campuses to again welcome back our small and engaged student body to live and learn together this fall, this time with even more in-person gatherings and activities.

As we have made the following decisions and engaged in ongoing preparations, we have sought guidance and opinions from federal, state, and local health professionals, risk management and legal advisors, and our own campus health physician, Dr. David Brubaker, who currently serves on the local Board of Health. Each piece of the college's plan regarding our operations, curricular, co-curricular, and public health operations for the fall has been shaped by the ongoing guidance of expert stakeholders. We are confident that we have done all we can to provide a sustainable plan for Houghton to continue with on-campus instruction this fall, resuming with a normal academic year with substantial breaks throughout for our students.

As we showed this past year, creating a safe campus environment will rely not only on the work of our planning groups, but will depend on the ongoing support and goodwill of each member of the community who must adhere to these new standards daily with vigilance. Students, staff, and faculty must partner with one another in the shared task of keeping our community safe and healthy. With the increasing availability of a safe and effective vaccine, those members of our community who have decided to be vaccinated are helping to restore more aspects of normalcy to our campus life. While we are not requiring the vaccine for our students, staff, and faculty, we are strongly encouraging everyone to be vaccinated and to discuss the efficacy and safety of the vaccine with their health care provider.

Even though the difficulty of this shared task continues to be great, Houghton has proven itself to be a place where students, staff, and faculty internalize and keep the commitments we make to one another. We believe that Houghton can be a place that flourishes in the midst of this uncertainty because of both our proactive approach to health and safety and also our strong commitment to one another as a Christ-centered working, worshipping, and learning community.

2 ADDRESSING REOPENING NEW YORK GUIDELINES

A more thorough plan was submitted to the state which includes a detailed description of each area's reopening plans, while the following section addresses each area that New York State outlined in its guidance released on June 20, 2020. The guidance indicated that each institution should "develop and submit a plan that, at a minimum, covers":

1. Reopening of the campus,
2. Monitoring of health conditions,
3. Containment of potential transmission of the virus, and
4. Shut down of in-person operations on the campus, if necessitated by widespread COVID-19 transmission.

Throughout Houghton's planning processes, faculty, staff, trustees, students, and parents have been consulted as we have tried to engage stakeholders at multiple junctures. We have committed to communicating regularly with students, parents, and employees throughout the summer and until students arrive in the fall. In these communications, stakeholders can use a form to submit questions and comments to the PREP Team, of which many have availed themselves.

2.1 REOPENING PLAN

2.1.1 Vaccination

Houghton College strongly encourages students, staff, and faculty to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, but will not require students to be vaccinated when they return to campus this fall.

As college life moves more towards “normal,” vaccinated students (and those students who have tested positive for COVID-19 in the previous 90-days) will likely feel that their experience is closer to that sense of normalcy than unvaccinated students. The College will continue to follow all guidance and mandates from the New York State Department of Health and the Center for Disease Control and encourages all students to consult with their healthcare provider.

2.1.2 Capacity, PPE, and Testing

We are encouraging employees from high-risk health categories that are unable to be vaccinated to work remotely and are considering requests from others who do not yet feel safe to return to work. Masks and shields have been and will continue to be made available to employees.

All students, staff, and faculty will be given one Houghton branded mask upon arrival.

Our reentry plan for the fall for Houghton and Houghton Buffalo requires that each student either:

Provide a negative COVID test result when they arrive on campus.

- a. Students that are not vaccinated will need to provide proof of a negative test taken within the three days prior to their arrival on campus.
- b. Students who are not vaccinated will also need to be tested three days after they return to campus and each time they spend a night off-campus. The college will cover the first three tests for these individuals, per semester. All other tests will be billed to the student’s insurance or need to be paid for by the student.

OR

Provide evidence of being fully vaccinated for COVID-19.

- a. According to the CDC, you are considered “fully vaccinated” if you are 14 days past having received two doses of either the Moderna or Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines OR 14 days past having received a single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

OR

Provide evidence that they had a positive test within 90 days of arrival

We will continue using our lab partners including Aegis Sciences Corporation, Quest Diagnostics and Wyoming County Community Hospital. We plan to have an inventory of at least 100 PCR testing kits/swabs available on campus at any time, as well as ample supplies of rapid antigen tests. Houghton Buffalo students will utilize testing protocols through primary care physicians. If a student does not have a primary care physician, they should reach out to their site director to inquire about available community resources for testing.

2.1.3 Residential Living and Extracurriculars

Vaccinated individuals will be able to relax masking and social distancing in all areas of campus. Students who are not vaccinated will relax their practicing of masking and social distancing when in their rooms with their roommate(s). Houghton Buffalo students that are not vaccinated are expected to remain

masked and socially distanced at all times when indoors. Any gatherings in common areas or for campus programming will be limited by whatever state or federal regulations are in effect at the time (such as no more than 50% of capacity and currently nor more than 100 people in any indoor space regardless of capacity limitations) and need to abide by masking and social distancing. Unvaccinated visitors will not be able to come into residence halls (aside from move-in and move-out days). Isolation and quarantine spaces have been identified in separate residential areas away from other students. The Student Guide has been updated to have new policies around COVID-19 which students will need to agree to uphold.

2.1.4 Operational Activity and Vulnerable Populations

Campus spaces will be limited in gathering size based on federal and state gathering restrictions. Classrooms and other gathering spaces will be arranged so that unvaccinated students are able to socially distance from one another. We are preparing to use spaces in the chapel and gymnasium as necessary for larger classes. Students, staff, and faculty who are in a high-risk health category that are unable to be vaccinated will still be able to work and learn through remote working and learning options made available to all people this spring.

2.1.5 Hygiene, Cleaning, Disinfection, and Restart Operations

Classes will be disinfected in accordance with NYSDOH guidelines. Bathrooms are normally fully disinfected once per day. The EPA number of primary products will be provided as well. Disinfecting materials will be available in the bathrooms for use by students. Hand sanitizing stations will be widely available and classrooms will be provided with disinfecting wipes for use by students.

2.2 MONITORING PLAN

2.2.1 Testing Responsibility, Frequency, and Protocols

The Student Health Center will be responsible for procuring PCR test kits from our lab partners as noted above and carrying out necessary on-campus testing targeting symptomatic and/or exposed students. Turnaround time for PCR test results has been and likely will continue to be between 48-72 hours. A designated testing site has been identified in an area proximate to but separated from the student health center. An ongoing inventory of at least 100 PCR testing swabs will be kept on hand at the health center. Students undergoing testing due to COVID-19 symptoms will remain in self-isolation until test results are confirmed. Students who are vaccinated but symptomatic for COVID-19 will be able to self-isolate in their individual rooms, while unvaccinated students will self-isolate in designated isolation spaces on campus. The local Department of Health will be notified of any positive tests. Once results are available, anyone testing positive will be transferred to isolation facilities.

2.2.2 Early Warning Signs

While we anticipate pausing in-person learning and activities if we reach 5% of our on-campus population testing positive for COVID-19 within a rolling 14-day period, we will convene our PREP Team weekly to determine the likelihood of the rate of positive tests on campus to be accelerating at an unmanageable pace. The CoronaCare Team will monitor these levels.

2.2.3 Tracing and Screening

Students, staff, and faculty will need to undergo symptom screening each weekday, beginning the second week of classes. We plan to continue utilizing an email-based screening platform called Healthy

Rosters which automatically reminds students and employees each day to complete an electronic survey, self-reporting any symptoms suggesting COVID and/or contact with positive cases. Those who screen positive will undergo additional evaluation and testing if appropriate. Those who screen negative will get a confirmatory email which students will need to present as they enter the Dining Hall each day (Utica and Buffalo campuses will require this proof before students enter the classroom).

2.3 CONTAINMENT PLAN

2.3.1 Isolation

The CoronaCare Team will oversee the relocation and care for students who test positive. Students who live close to campus (within 30-minutes) will be encouraged to isolate at home, though all students will have this option. Commuter students will need to isolate at home. On-campus isolation units are in an upper-class housing facility that is used only by faculty and staff with additional spaces in an off-campus alumni house, each with separate bathrooms. Students will be able to continue to learn remotely while in isolation and will have access to on-campus academic and mental health supports as needed. Daily health checks will be performed by health center staff. Students requiring higher level medical care will be transported to local hospital by ambulance.

The CoronaCare Team in consultation with the ACDOH will help conduct contact tracing in the event of a positive case on campus. List of students' housing and class rosters will be provided to the CoronaCare Team at the beginning of the spring semester to assist in this process.

2.3.2 Quarantine

Students who are identified as close contacts of individuals who have tested positive, and any other students that the DOH requires, will be tested and quarantined. As for isolation, students who live close to campus (within 30-minutes) will be encouraged to quarantine at home, though all students will have this option. Students requiring quarantine on campus will be housed in residence hall rooms that are on unoccupied floors. Students who live by themselves or who are the only roommate of a student who has been relocated for isolation may quarantine in their room. The CoronaCare Team will oversee the care for these students as well. Students will be able to continue to learn remotely while in quarantine and will have access to on-campus academic and mental health supports as needed. Daily health checks will be performed by members of the CoronaCare Team. Repeat testing will be performed as necessary for quarantined students (e.g. after the development of new symptoms.)

2.3.3 Communication

We plan to continue doing a regular summary email to students, staff, and faculty about the state of COVID-19 cases on campus. These were sent out weekly in the spring. Provided that the case counts on campus remain low (e.g. below 2% over a 14-day period), we will provide these summary communications monthly. In the event of a clustered outbreak or a rapid rise in case counts, emergency notifications will be sent to campus stakeholders.

2.4 SHUTDOWN PLAN

2.4.1 Operational Activity

We anticipate pausing in-person learning and activities, as per current NYS guidelines, if we reach 5% of our on-campus population testing positive for COVID-19 within a rolling 14-day period and will convene our PREP Team weekly to determine the likelihood of the rate of positive tests on campus to be accelerating at an unmanageable pace.

2.4.2 Move-Out

In the event of the campus shutting down, students will be given 48 hours to vacate campus. Students will be given ample time prior to this tier being reached for them to consider the ramifications of the possibility of a quick shutdown and move-out procedure.

2.4.3 Communication

Draft communications for both a move to remote learning and a campus shutdown have been drafted. Students, staff, faculty, and parents will be communicated with at each stage of the process.

3 REOPENING CHECKLIST

The following is a brief description of how Houghton meets the higher education reopening mandatory requirements outlined by New York State.

3.1 PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Requirement	Proof or Plan of Implementation
Any time individuals come within 6 ft. of another person who does not reside in the same residence (i.e., roommate), acceptable face coverings must be worn. This provision should not be construed to require physical distancing among roommates or to require face coverings be worn while inside an individual's residence.	All campus members will need to practice social distancing and masking when not with their roommate(s) or by themselves. Areas throughout campus will be reconfigured to enforce and encourage social distancing with classrooms and public spaces being redesigned to provide occupants with opportunities to socially distance from each other. <i>Vaccinated individuals are exempt from this requirement, as per NYS guidelines.</i>
In consultation with the local health department, identify where students who are exposed to, or infected with, COVID-19 will be residing and how daily needs (e.g. food, medication) will be met if it becomes necessary to have a period of quarantine or isolation.	The CoronaCare Team will be responsible for relocating students infected with COVID-19 to isolation units with private restrooms and students who are their close contacts to quarantine units in designated floors within residence halls removed from other residents. Daily needs will be met by the CoronaCare Team in consultation with other campus partners.
Reference relevant industry-specific guidelines provided by the Department of Health – and available on the New York Forward website –	All area reopening plans have been shaped in accordance with public health and state guidance,

for operations of dining halls, research, office workspaces, gyms, transportation, retail stores, and other activities, as applicable.	with continued adaptation to changing protocols issued by these bodies.
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3.2 PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Requirement	Proof or Plan of Implementation
Any time individuals come within 6 ft. of another person who does not reside in the same residence (i.e., roommate), acceptable face coverings must be worn. This provision should not be construed to require physical distancing among roommates or to require face coverings be worn while inside an individual's residence.	All unvaccinated campus members will need to practice social distancing and masking when not with their roommate(s) or by themselves. Areas throughout campus will be reconfigured to enforce and encourage social distancing with classrooms and public spaces being redesigned to provide occupants with opportunities to socially distance from each other. One mask will be provided to each student, staff, and faculty member by the college.
Advise employees, students, and visitors that they are required to wear face coverings in common areas or situations where social distancing may be difficult to maintain, such as riding in elevators, entering/exiting classrooms or student centers, and traveling around the campus.	Signs will be placed throughout campus reminding campus community members and visitors about masking and social distancing.
Provide face coverings to employees who directly interact with students or members of the public while at work, at no cost to the employee.	One mask will be provided to each student, staff, and faculty member by the college.
Train employees on how to adequately put on, take off, clean (as applicable), and discard PPE. See CDC guidance for additional information.	Each staff and faculty member will have been instructed on proper usage before the first week of orientation by college personnel.

3.3 HYGIENE, CLEANING, AND DISINFECTION

Requirement	Proof or Plan of Implementation
Adhere to hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection requirements from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Department of Health (DOH) and maintain logs that include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection. Identify cleaning and disinfection frequency for each facility type and assign responsibility.	College employees will record the scope of cleaning and disinfection, with sanitizing stations set up throughout campus.
Provide and maintain hand hygiene stations throughout the institution, including handwashing with soap, running warm water, and disposable paper towels, as well as an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing 60% or	Sanitizing stations will be set up throughout campus for general use.

more alcohol for areas where handwashing is not feasible.	
Conduct regular cleaning and disinfection of facilities and more frequent cleaning and disinfection for high-risk areas used by many individuals and for frequently touched surfaces. Refer to Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) products identified by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as effective against COVID-19.	College employees will record the scope of cleaning and disinfection, with sanitizing stations set up throughout campus.
Ensure regular cleaning and disinfection of restrooms	Bathrooms will be cleaned regularly.
Provide for the cleaning and disinfection of exposed areas in the event an individual is confirmed to have COVID-19, with such cleaning and disinfection to include, at a minimum, all heavy transit areas and high-touch surfaces. Refer to CDC guidelines.	College facilities workers will be trained in thorough cleaning protocol per CDC guidelines. Areas in which a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 has recently been will be thoroughly cleaned to these standards.

3.4 COMMUNICATION

Requirement	Proof or Plan of Implementation
Affirm you have reviewed and understand the state issued industry guidelines and submit reopening plans prior to reopening.	The college's plan has been submitted in accordance with NYS guidelines and affirmed by our college president.
Conspicuously post completed reopening plans for employees and students to access.	This reopening plan and a shortened version will be made available on our COVID-19 website.

3.5 SCREENING

Requirement	Proof or Plan of Implementation
Implement mandatory health screening practices (e.g. questionnaire, temperature check) for employees, students, and, where practicable, scheduled visitors (e.g. on-campus tour groups) asking about, at minimum: (1) COVID-19 symptoms in past 14 days, (2) positive COVID-19 test in past 14 days, and/or (3) close or proximate contact with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case in past 14 days. Assessment responses must be reviewed every day and such review must be documented.	The college will use an email-based screening tool which is HIPPA-compliant and will be reviewed by Health Center staff each weekday. Appropriate college personnel will follow-up with students or employees who fail to complete this. Those who indicate a potential exposure or possible symptoms will be contacted by Health Center staff.
Employees reporting to work on-campus must be screened on a daily basis.	The college will use an email-based screening tool which is HIPPA-compliant and will be reviewed by Health Center staff each weekday. Appropriate college personnel will follow-up with students or employees who fail to complete this. Those who indicate a potential exposure or possible

	symptoms will be contacted by Health Center staff. Students must complete this each weekday. Employees will need to complete this each day they report to work.
Students must be screened periodically as determined by the higher education institution but are not required to be screened on a daily basis.	The college will use an email-based screening tool which is HIPPA-compliant and will be reviewed by Health Center staff each weekday. Appropriate college personnel will follow-up with students or employees who fail to complete this. Those who indicate a potential exposure or possible symptoms will be contacted by Health Center staff. Students must complete this each weekday. Employees will need to complete this each day they report to work.
An individual who screens positive for COVID-19 exposure or symptoms must be immediately sent home, to their residence, or to the designated quarantine or isolation location with instructions or arrangement for health assessment and testing.	The CoronaCare Team will be responsible for relocating students infected with COVID-19 to isolation units with private restrooms and students who are their close contacts to quarantine units in designated floors within residence halls removed from other residents. Daily needs will be met by the CoronaCare Team in consultation with other campus partners.
Immediately notify the state and local health departments of confirmed positive cases.	The CoronaCare Team in consultation with the campus Health Center will notify the DOH in the event of a positive case on campus.
In the case of an individual testing positive, develop plans with local health departments to trace all contacts of the individual, in accordance with the New York State Contact Tracing Program. Confidentiality must be maintained as required by federal and state law and regulations	The CoronaCare Team in consultation with the ACDOH will help conduct contact tracing in the event of a positive case on campus. List of students' housing and class rosters will be provided to the CoronaCare Team at the beginning of the spring semester to assist in this process.

4 IMPLICATIONS OF GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR HOUGHTON’S CONTEXT

In our planning, the following principles and a detailed rationale for each have guided our decisions.

4.1 PRINCIPLES

Thoroughly evaluate and minimize risks based on available information

While we initially erred on the side of caution in the midst of evolving and uncertain data about the COVID-19 virus, we have since updated our approach to acknowledge that much more is known about how to ensure the safety of our campus population. Rather than exercising caution at all junctures, which is still important, we instead want to ensure that we are continually evaluating and minimizing risks with the recognition that we cannot eliminate risk completely. While we highly value the in-person experience for our students, staff, and faculty, we will continue to exercise careful judgement, with a

thorough analysis of the risks entailed with repopulating our campus community again. In this, we will continue to provide an exceptional educational experience for our on-campus and remote learners, ensuring that we not place ourselves or our students in an unnecessarily risky situation.

Recognize our limited care capacity, seeking to minimize campus spread and prevent outbreaks

As Houghton and Houghton Buffalo are small communities, we have a finite amount of on-campus resources to care for students, staff, and faculty during a public health crisis. We are prepared to treat, isolate, and recuperate a handful of individuals who may test positive for the virus on-campus and expect that this is a likelihood for the year. To put us in the best position to limit this possibility, however, and to further mitigate the possibility that an outbreak happens on campus, our strategies detailed in this plan are comprehensive, unprecedented for a residential campus, and far-reaching.

Reduce unnecessary risk by stewarding our resources well

In developing our reopening plan, it is important for us to consider what resources (e.g. time, infrastructure, money, personnel) we have available to us and recognize that these are finite. To serve our students, staff, and faculty well, we must appropriately gauge what we can reasonably and responsibly achieve. We have a limit on the number of individuals who may contract the virus, for instance, that we can adequately serve with our available resources. Thus, we cannot overstate our ability in this moment but must be transparent about what risks we are able to withstand.

Proactively communicate risk for vulnerable populations on- and off-campus

There are members of our community who are of advanced age, have underlying medical problems, or who have compromised immune systems and are unable to be vaccinated. Even if most community members may not be at risk for severe illness, it is imperative for us to provide safe learning and working environments for those who are vulnerable. The mitigation measures that will be expected of our community, (e.g. masking indoors) are aimed primarily at protecting vulnerable community members by minimizing contact, reducing overall transmission risk and slowing the spread of the virus. Given Houghton College's location in a small rural community, we recognize that what happens on campus has significant implications for the broader community, and communicating potential risks to vulnerable members of the broader Houghton community is an important goal of our mitigation efforts.

Limit impact on student's academic progress

Our institutional mission centers on the student educational experience and our reopening plan is equally centered around supporting each student's education. The measures we will put in place this year must be viewed in light of this principle, as we go to great lengths to ensure that we provide a safe environment within which students can live and learn. Providing a flexible learning experience, requiring vaccination for off-campus academic programs, and the great lengths we will go to encourage vaccination, masking, and social distancing among the campus community have all been implemented so that we can limit the impact on each student's academic progress and experience.

Prioritize collective safety while creating reasonable avenues for personal conscience to evaluate individual risks

We eagerly anticipate a return to relative "normal" of prior years when it comes to the traditional Houghton experiences that we have missed during the pandemic, including in-person Chapel services,

open hours in the residence halls, and relaxed dining hall protocols. Vaccination rates will play a large role in our ability to reclaim aspects of these Houghton traditions. We know that some, however, will be unable or choose not to receive the vaccine. In settings where we have a mixture of both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals, then, collective safety becomes a bit trickier to navigate. To honor the individual choices of our campus members while not putting our collective safety at greater risk through these choices, unvaccinated individuals will be expected, per NYS guidelines, to follow additional safety protocols to ensure the continued openness of the campus and health of the college community.

4.2 MEASURES BASED ON ASSUMPTIONS AND PRINCIPLES

The residential college experience has long engaged in risk management practices, as students from all over the world descend upon a concentrated campus community, living among one another in relatively close quarters, engaging in competitive athletics, and participating in experiential co-curricular activities. Education is itself a risky endeavor! A residential education in an age of ongoing uncertainty regarding the effects of a global health crisis and its economic impacts raise additional concerns to which institutions like Houghton must respond. The following plan implements risk management practices while recognizing that risk cannot be eliminated but must instead be mitigated. The mitigation strategies outlined utilize what is currently the best knowledge we have on virus transmission, symptom tracking, containment strategies, and epidemiological modeling. Based on information from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the New York State Department of Health (DOH), and various associations providing guidance to institutions of higher education, such as the American College Health Association (ACHA) and National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA), Houghton’s reopening plan implements the following measures:

4.2.1 Minimizing the Spread of the Virus

Minimizing the spread of the virus on campus as much as possible is our highest priority. Recognizing that it is an inevitability that at least one member of our community will contract the virus simply due to the high transmission risk present in high-contact, residential facilities, we must prepare to serve students, staff, and faculty well in that event. Even with this inevitability, however, Houghton has a limited capacity to care for a large number of affected individuals, in terms of space, time, and personnel. Thus, while the risk of fatality among college-aged populations is lower than other populations, we still must do all we can to limit the presence and potential spread of the virus among our community given both the complexity and cost of treating sick or infected individuals and importance of protecting vulnerable members of the community. Given the limitations of our resources, the need to flatten the curve on Houghton’s campus so that our resources are not quickly overrun and overwhelmed is paramount. This is because our high-water mark of cases we are able to manage is much lower than that of larger institutions. Thus, the measures outlined in this plan, though seemingly extreme in comparison to other businesses or industries in the American economy, must be understood in the light of our available resources.

4.2.2 The Role of Vaccination

The rates of vaccination on our campus will undoubtedly play a large role in our ability to resume “normal” activities on campus. Practically, NYS will likely continue to provide ongoing masking and social distancing requirements of unvaccinated individuals. To accommodate these requirements, then, we will be unable to resume maximum capacity events like Chapel or athletic competitions without either

requiring vaccination of all attendees (which we do not plan to do) or setting aside parts of venues for vaccinated individuals to cluster together without socially distancing or masking and having other sections to accommodate those who are still bound by social distancing and masking requirements. Contextually, vaccination rates will also meaningfully shape transmission rates on campus. Vaccination has been shown to significantly reduce the possibility of both contracting and transmitting the virus, meaning that the more individuals that are vaccinated on campus, the fewer individuals we will have that are susceptible to contracting the virus.

4.2.3 The Role of Testing

Testing, while important, cannot be our only measure of tracking and containment. While testing symptomatic campus members is a key part of identifying and isolating affected individuals, negative test results are not a guarantee of safety, as individuals may be tested and then soon after contract the virus through contact with an affected individual, thereby negating the negative test result.

4.2.4 Symptom Screening

While it misses asymptomatic individuals, symptom screening mitigates population risk by identifying potentially affected individuals who can then be evaluated further if needed. Houghton will continue to use a tracking strategy utilizing a weekday symptom survey managed through our Student Health Center. All students and employees will need to complete an electronic survey, self-reporting any symptoms suggesting COVID and/or contact with positive case. Those who screen positive will undergo additional evaluation and testing if appropriate.

4.2.5 Masking, Social Distancing, and Ventilation

Masking and social distancing, as well as ventilation are equally effective strategies each individual, particularly unvaccinated individuals, must commit to practicing in order to lessen the risk of transmission and spread. Though simple practices, these three pieces of Houghton’s reopening plan are vital to successfully keeping the campus safe, and will significantly increase the likelihood that the campus can remain open even if a campus member tests positive for the virus. In addition to tracking the health of our community, it is essential that each member of our campus does their part in cutting the down the risk of spread by vigilantly practicing these “Big Three” strategies.

4.2.6 Who is Here, When, and Other Assurances

We must have a strong understanding of who is on our campus, when, and assurances that they will practice the “Big Three.” Houghton has a long history of being a campus that readily welcomes visitors and extends hospitality to all who step foot on our campus. To ensure that we have every opportunity to begin on-campus classes in the spring and carry them through to completion, limiting travel and visitation to and from our campus will need to be a high priority to keep the virus off campus as much as possible.

5 KEY COMMUNITY MEASURES: MAKE SAFE CHOICES

5.1 FOR ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Houghton will provide a safe environment to which students can return this year. The ongoing safety of that environment, however, will depend upon the consistent and deliberate choices that each student,

staff, and faculty member will make each day to mask, socially distance themselves from others when possible, and be outside as often as possible and get good ventilation in occupied spaces. To Make Safe Choices, each person must actively choose to continue to contribute to the ongoing safety of Houghton's residential environment. The individual choices that each person makes, more so than ever before, have an outsized effect on the people around them. Each person's individual safety and ongoing health is not just the result of the personal choices that are made by that person. Each person's safety and health is meaningfully shaped and affected by the personal choices of those around them. Choices, then, are not made at *your* individual risk but are made at *our* collective risk. The daily choices to mask, socially distance from others in public, and seek out well ventilated spaces have long term and far-reaching consequences on the ongoing safety and sustainability of life at Houghton this spring.

5.2 FOR STUDENTS

For life on campus, unvaccinated students will need to practice the Big Three when not in their residence hall room. A student and his or her roommate/s can be considered a small family unit and therefore do not have to mask or distance with each other.

5.2.1 Masking

Unvaccinated students will agree to wear masks whenever they are out of their room and are not alone or with their roommate(s). Masks will be required indoors at all times. When unvaccinated students are outside, they will not be required to wear masks as long as they are socially distanced from others that are not their roommate(s). If they are unable to socially distance while outside, they need to be wearing a mask under current state guidelines.

5.2.1.1 Unvaccinated off-site students, commuters, and students who live off-campus will need to wear a mask while on campus at all times except during meal times.

5.2.2 Social Distancing

Unvaccinated students will need to keep socially distanced (at least six-feet) from others who are not their roommate(s). When they are outside, they will not be required to wear masks as long as they are socially distanced from others that are not their roommate(s). If they are unable to socially distance while outside, they need to be wearing a mask.

5.2.3 Ventilation

Students are encouraged to be outside as much as possible and to be in well-ventilated spaces whenever indoors when able.

5.3 FOR EMPLOYEES

Many of the expectations for students apply to faculty and staff as well.

5.3.1 Masking

Unvaccinated employees will need to wear masks whenever they are in inside campus buildings unless they are alone in their offices. While outside, they are required to wear masks whenever they are within six-feet of other people-under current state guidelines.

5.3.2 Social Distancing

Unvaccinated employees will need to keep socially distanced (at least six-feet) from others at all times and wear a mask when not able to be socially distanced.

5.3.3 Ventilation

Employees are encouraged to be outside as much as possible and to be in well-ventilated spaces whenever indoors.

5.4 FOR VISITORS

For the safety of our students, staff, and faculty, unvaccinated visitors on Houghton's campuses this year will be restricted to outdoor spaces and **will only be permitted to be in the Campus Center, unless they are an approved visitor through a campus department**. Vaccinated visitors will be able to access all parts of campus, where appropriate. A visitor is defined as an individual who is not a current employee or student of the college.

Vendors who have contracted with the college may visit campus to deliver goods and services but must be in consistent contact with a college representative as to when they plan to be on campus.

All approved visitors will need to submit to a screening procedure at the direction of their campus host if accessing areas besides the Campus Center.

5.4.1 Masking

Unvaccinated visitors will be required to wear masks when they are in inside campus buildings. While outside, they are required to wear masks when near others.

5.4.2 Social Distancing

Unvaccinated visitors will need to keep socially distanced (at least six-feet) from others at all times and wear a mask when not able to be socially distanced.

6 ARRIVAL AND TRAVEL GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS, STAFF, AND FACULTY

As it is imperative that we do all we can to limit the presence and spread of the virus on our campus this spring, travel continues to be a high-risk activity for all members of our community, particularly for unvaccinated individuals. In most cases, travel will be one of the most likely ways in which the virus will appear on our campus which is why the following measures will be put in place in the year.

6.1 CAMPUS ARRIVAL FOR STUDENTS

As students arrive to campus for the beginning of the fall semester, they must produce either **a negative COVID test result when they arrive on campus, or provide evidence of being fully vaccinated for COVID-19 (or of having had a positive test within 90 days)**. Students that are not vaccinated will need to provide proof of a negative test taken within the three days prior to their arrival on campus. Students who are not vaccinated will also need to be tested three days after they return to campus and each time they spend a night off-campus throughout the semester. The college will cover the first three tests for these individuals, per semester. All other tests will be billed to the student's insurance or need to be paid for by the student.

6.2 TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS DURING THE SEMESTER

We will not be restricting off-campus travel this year, though we urge all Houghton students, staff, and faculty to travel safely. International travel continues to be discouraged by state and federal public health organizations. Unvaccinated students who travel overnight off-campus are expected to report this travel to the Office of Student Life and be tested three days after arriving back to campus.

7 CONTRIBUTORS

This plan has been completed by the following members of the PREP Team.

<u>Group</u>		<u>Role</u>	<u>Department/Area</u>
<i>PREP Team Steering Committee</i>			
Greg	Bish		Chief of Staff, President's Office
Marc	Smithers	Chair	Chief Student Life Officer
Dale	Wright		Chief Financial Officer
Paul	Young		Chief Academic Officer
<i>Curricular Planning</i>			
Paul	Young	Sub Chair	Curricular
Cathy	Freytag		Academic Council
Kevin	Kettinger		Registrar
John	Rowley		General Education
Sunshine	Sullivan		Faculty Development
Don	Haingray		Technology Services
<i>Co-Curricular Planning</i>			
Marc	Smithers	Sub Chair	Student Life
Matthew	Webb		Athletics
Katie	Breitigan		Residence Life
AC	Taylor		Student Engagement
Michael	Jordan		Spiritual Life
<i>Operations</i>			
Dale	Wright	Sub Chair	Finances
Chad	Plymale		Facilities
Danae	Forrest		Accounting
Nancy	Stanley		Human Resources
<i>Communications</i>			
Michael	Blankenship	Sub Chair	Marketing/Communication
Ryan	Spear		Enrollment
Amanda	Zambrano		Alumni Engagement
Jason	Mucher		Athletics
<i>Public Health Procedures</i>			
David	Brubaker	Sub Chair	Health Center
Marc	Smithers		Student Life
Leah	Burgess		Health Center

Andrew Cahill
Deanna Hand

Facilities
Athletics

8 VACCINE FAQ

While Houghton College will not require vaccination as a prerequisite for in-person learning, we strongly encourage all students, staff, and faculty who are eligible to receive the vaccine to be vaccinated as soon as they are able. Those who are hesitant to receive the vaccine should discuss the efficacy and safety of the vaccine with their health care provider. We do understand and respect that some individuals may choose not to be vaccinated for various reasons and we will seek to provide opportunities for them to participate in the life of our campus community consistent with ensuring the ongoing health and safety of our entire community.

Q: When am I considered “fully vaccinated”?

A: According to the CDC, you are considered “fully vaccinated” if you are 14 days past having received two doses of either the Moderna or Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines OR 14 days past having received a single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

Q: How long am I considered “fully vaccinated”?

A: According to the CDC, you are considered “fully vaccinated” for at least 90 days following either your second dose of the Moderna or Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines OR having received a single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. We are currently waiting to see if these dates will be extended and anticipate providing as much leeway as possible for those who have been previously vaccinated to be exempt from quarantine and isolation requirements imposed by Houghton or the Department of Health (such as being identified as a close contact).

Q: What ongoing expectations will there be for unvaccinated individuals to lower the health risk for other members of the campus community?

A: Students that are not vaccinated (or who have not tested positive for COVID-19 in the previous 90 days) will need to continue to mask and socially distance around people with whom they do not live. They also will need to be tested for COVID-19 three days after returning to campus from any overnight off-campus travel.

Q: Will fully vaccinated individuals still need to do daily symptom screenings on Healthy Rosters?

A. Yes. Since vaccines do not provide 100% immunity from COVID-19 and the possibility of “breakthrough cases” (vaccinated individuals contracting COVID-19) remain, it is still important for all members of the Houghton community to self-monitor for symptoms of the virus.

Q: Will there be overnight travel restrictions for students, even if they’re fully vaccinated?

A. Students who are fully vaccinated will no longer be requiring students to quarantine when they arrive back to campus if they've traveled off-campus overnight. Students who are not fully vaccinated (or who have not tested positive for COVID-19 in the previous 90 days) will need to be tested three days after they arrive back to campus from traveling off-campus overnight.

Q. Will Houghton require vaccination for any of its academic programs?

A. Yes. Students involved in programs which require overnight off-campus travel, such as the Highlander Wilderness Program or a study abroad program like London Honors or Houghton East Africa, will need to be vaccinated for COVID-19. We anticipate this being a requirement of international travel in the foreseeable future and we also want to limit as much risk as we reasonably can that there is not a COVID-19 outbreak among the small learning cohorts in these programs. These learning environments do not have the same ready access to COVID-19 testing nor quarantine and isolation resources as students who live and learn on Houghton's main campus. We are still waiting to hear from local school districts about any vaccination requirements for student-teachers.

Q. Will Houghton require vaccination for student-athletes or any of its co-curricular programs?

A. No, though we strongly recommend vaccination. The risk of contracting COVID-19 is great in some co-curricular programs, such as Athletics, which has prolonged close-contact with other individuals. Vaccination not only provides added protection in these instances, but it is also highly unlikely that vaccinated individuals will miss any practices or games because they are much less likely to need to quarantine or isolate after coming into contact with someone who tests positive. Unvaccinated student athletes will almost certainly need to quarantine or isolate at some point in their season either due to contracting the virus themselves or being identified as a close-contact of someone who has tested positive.

Q. I'm fully vaccinated but was identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19. Do I need to quarantine?

A. No. You do not need to quarantine, but should continue to monitor and report any symptoms consistent with COVID-19. If you do develop symptoms, make sure to report them on your Healthy Rosters daily symptom survey.

Q. Will fully vaccinated students, staff, and faculty still be required to follow the Big Three?

A. No, though we still encourage you students, staff, and faculty to closely monitor themselves for symptoms of COVID-19 and to mask and socially distance in situations where you do not know the vaccination status of others in your group.

Q. How do I sign up to receive a COVID-19 vaccine?

A. Those who live, work, or study in New York can sign up to receive a vaccine. Please visit <https://vaccinefinder.org/search/> for information on how to register to receive a vaccine.

Q. Where can I find more information about the COVID-19 vaccine?

A. Aside from talking with your health care provider, there are several ways to access helpful information about the COVID-19 vaccine. Consult the resources of the CDC

(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html>), the WHO (<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/covid-19-vaccines>), or videos such as those produced by Gavi (<https://youtu.be/IFjIVllcCvc/>) of John Hopkins School of Public Health (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w4sUuFBEo2g>).

9 RESOURCES

The following resources have helped inform our planning:

- American College Health Association: <https://www.acha.org/COVID-19>
- Centers for Disease Control
 - Considerations for Institutes of Higher Education: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/considerations.html>
 - Coronavirus Index: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities in New York State: <https://cicu.org/news/creating-safe-and-resilient-campuses-suggestions-reopening-and-reimagining-colleges-and-universities-new-york>
- Connecticut Higher Education Subcommittee: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/News/20200506-Recommendations-to-Governor-Lamont-for-a-phased-reopening-of-colleges-and-universities.pdf?la=en> New York Forward: <https://forward.ny.gov/>
- New York State Department of Health: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>
- Reopening Allegany County: <https://www.alleganyco.com/coronavirus/reopening-allegany-county/>
- Reopening New York State: <https://forward.ny.gov/phase-four-industries>
- World Health Organization: https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab_1