

MISSOURI SOUTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY

COVID - 19 CONTINGENCY PLAN

Contingency Plan Guiding Principles

Missouri Southern State University has opened for the Spring 2021 semester with classes being offered face-to-face, online and in blended format. The ongoing pandemic will require contingency plans in the event they are needed at some point during the academic year. These plans could impact a wide array of university operations, including the way classes or services are delivered.

Over-Arching Goal

If required to implement alternative or contingency plans during the academic year, the university's goal is not to move all classes to online or remote delivery nor close the entire campus, if at all possible. Instead, the university would temporarily suspend or modify individual courses, activities, programs, facilities, and operations as necessary.

This process could result in some operations being affected while other operations might continue as planned. For example, online courses will not be impacted just because their seated counterparts are temporarily suspended or converted to remote delivery.

The contingency plan analysis may also change depending on the course or operation at issue. For example, under similar circumstances, a laboratory class might continue to meet in person while a lecture-based class might temporarily move online.

Guiding principles

To assist in determining actions appropriate for this process, the university will use the following principles as a frame of reference for decision making:

- Impact on the health and physical well-being of students, faculty, and staff
- Impact on the university's mission
 - Mission considerations include:
 - Academic quality, enrollment, student success, and the student experience
- Impact on the mental health and morale of students, faculty, and staff
- Impact on university risk management and student, faculty and staff compliance
- Impact on our state, and the local community
- Other data and factors

Using the aforementioned principles, campus administrators will evaluate the following data and factors when determining whether and when to implement contingency plans:

- 1. *Available campus case data, including but not limited to:**
 - A. Number and rate of change of active cases
 - B. Number and rate of change of quarantine/isolation cases
 - C. **Faculty, staff, and student availability and absenteeism
- 2. Isolation and quarantine space available for on-campus students.**
- 3. Access to COVID-19 testing and other preventative resources such as masks, other PPE, cleaning supplies, and vaccinations.**
- 4. Capacity of the local health care system (hospital COVID bed space and ventilators) and directives and/or guidance from health officials and federal, state, and local governments.**
- 5. Positivity rates of Jasper County and/or other surrounding counties.**

There is not a particular threshold that will trigger a specific contingency plan. Rather, decisions will be based upon the evaluation of these and any additional factors that arise as a result of changes to the campus and community cases.

The Board of Governors will be consulted before a decision is reached to suspend all or substantially all of the university's operations. University administrators will make decisions on other contingency plans and report those decisions at regularly scheduled board and/or pandemic committee meetings.

MSSU will use a phased approach to dealing with changes in the campus and community caseload.

*Available data includes information sent solely to the Willcoxon Health Center by campus constituents. If information is not reported to the Willcoxon Health Center, MSSU is unable to provide accurate dashboard counts to the campus community.

**There is no central repository to report cumulative absences for students nor employees. These data would be shared via direct communication in the institution's existing governance structure.

MSSU COVID-19 PHASED OPERATIONS

Phase One: Campus Fully Reopened

- University is operating at pre-pandemic status – “normal.”
- No modifications to any classes or campus operations.

Triggers considered for moving to Phase Two include:

1. Campus Data
 - A. Any active or pending positive cases in campus community

Phase Two: Campus Open with Modifications-A

Academic Courses

- primarily face to face classes with accommodations in place for social distancing
- masks worn in class

Support Services for Students and Faculty

- offered primarily in-person with accommodations in place for social distancing and virtual options available

Residence Life

- open at reduced capacity with available quarantine and isolation spaces

Campus Status

- open for employees to report to work as usual
- limited access to external guests

Mass Gatherings/Campus Events

- no more than 100 individuals gathered in one space at one time
- space must accommodate 6 ft between individuals
- masks required

Staffing

- MSSU is able to maintain enough faculty and staff to adequately provide for the current operational plan of the university

Rec Center

- open at 50% capacity with certain group activity/fitness areas closed

Athletics

- Fall sports have been suspended
- Allowing weight training and conditioning activities

Triggers considered for moving to Phase Three include:

1. Campus Data
 - A. Continued increase of active cases in specific areas of campus
 - B. Continued increase of total quarantine/isolation cases
 - C. Increase of faculty, staff, and student availability and absenteeism
2. Isolation and quarantine spaces 50% full.
3. Decrease in access to COVID testing and other preventative resources such as masks, other PPE, cleaning supplies, and vaccinations.
4. Decreased capacity of the local health care system (hospital COVID bed space and ventilators) and/or directives and guidance from health officials and federal, state, and local governments.
5. Increasing positivity rates of Jasper County and/or other surrounding counties.

Phase Three: - Campus Open with Modifications-B (Current MSSU Status)

Academic Courses

- primarily face to face classes with accommodations in place for social distancing
- adjusting courses to distance learning format as needed in high impacted disciplines and/or buildings
- masks worn in class

Support Services for Students and Faculty

- offered primarily in-person with accommodations in place for social distancing and virtual options available

Residence Life

- open at reduced capacity with available quarantine and isolation spaces
- as isolation/quarantine spaces fill some students may have to move home

Campus Status

- open for employees to report to work as usual

- closed to most external guests (exceptions may be made for mission critical or pandemic/medical related community needs)
- no campus facility rentals to third parties

Mass Gatherings/Campus Events

- no more than 50 individuals gathered in one space at one time
- space must accommodate 6 ft between individuals
- masks required

Staffing

- MSSU is able to maintain enough faculty and staff to adequately provide for the current operational plan of the university

Select Buildings/Services

- Library – Limited entry/exits for control access, faculty, staff and student access only

Athletics

- Athletic activities will take place according to NCAA and MIAA guidelines
- Attendance at home contests will be evaluated per individual sport.

Triggers for moving to Phase Four include:

1. Campus Data
 - A. Continued increase of active cases in specific areas of campus
 - B. Continued increase of total quarantine/isolation cases
 - C. Continued increase of absenteeism for faculty, staff, and students
2. Isolation and quarantine spaces 75% full.
3. Limited access to COVID testing and other preventative resources such as masks, other PPE, cleaning supplies, and vaccinations.
4. Continued decrease in capacity of the local health care system (hospital covid bed space and ventilators) and/or directives and guidance from health officials and federal, state, and local governments.
5. Increasing positivity rates of Jasper County and/or other surrounding counties.

Phase Four: Campus Open with Modifications-C

Academic Courses

- accommodations are made, if necessary, to lecture-type courses to be offered in a distance learning format
- select courses with clinicals, labs, etc. could remain in face-to-face format, if necessary, as approved by Academic Affairs

Support Services for Students and Faculty

- offered virtually

Residence Life

- limited capacity for quarantine and isolation, so only students with no housing option allowed to stay on campus
- all other residents move home

Campus Status

- closed to ALL external guests
- employees might be limited or have staggered shifts to minimize the numbers of individuals in a particular space at one time
- most activities are limited, cancelled, or offered virtually

Mass Gatherings/Campus Events

- no more than 10 individuals gathered in one space at one time
- space must accommodate 6 ft between individuals
- masks required

Staffing

- MSSU is able to maintain enough faculty and staff to adequately provide for the current operational plan of the university

Select Buildings/Services

- Recreation Center & Library closed
- activities that are mission critical will be evaluated on a case-by case basis (commencement, Board Meetings, President's Cabinet Meetings, etc.)

Athletics

- no countable athletically-related activities allowed

Triggers for moving to Phase Five include:

1. Campus Data

- A. Continued increase of active cases in specific areas of campus

- B. Continued increase of total quarantine/isolation cases
 - C. Continued increase of absenteeism for faculty, staff, and students
2. No isolation/quarantine space available in on-campus residence facilities.
 3. Limited access to COVID testing and other preventative resources such as masks, other PPE, cleaning supplies, and vaccinations.
 4. Continued decrease in capacity of the local health care system (hospital COVID bed space and ventilators) and/or directives and guidance from health officials and federal, state, and local governments.
 5. Increasing positivity rates of Jasper County and/or other surrounding counties.

Phase Five: Campus “Closed” Except Essential Employees

Academic Courses

- only offered in distance learning format

Campus Status

- closed to external guests and non-essential employees

Select Buildings/Services

- activities that are mission critical will be evaluated on a case-by case basis (commencement, Board Meetings, President’s Cabinet Meetings, etc.)

Athletics

- no countable athletically-related activities allowed

Individual items within a Phase might be implemented without a full change in Phase, if conditions warrant.