
Subject: COVID-19 UPDATE: Spring Calendar

Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2020 at 12:26:28 PM Eastern Daylight Time

From: President Lugo

Dear Queens Community,

As we prepare to return to in-person learning and reduced density residency for our spring semester, I promised to keep you updated on our specific plans. We have some important updates on our reopening progress to share.

Updated Academic Calendar

First, we have approved an updated academic calendar that prioritizes health and best positions the university to have a safe residential semester this spring. Here are the details:

- We will begin classes on Tuesday, January 19, 2021, for all undergraduate and sixteen-week graduate courses. Our fully online graduate programs will start their first eight-week session as scheduled on January 11.
- To prioritize health and safety and to limit travel away from campus there will be no spring break this year.
- Final exams will occur as scheduled from April 27 through May 4.
- Commencement remains scheduled for Saturday, May 8, 2021.

This new schedule ensures we have time after the holidays to implement our testing protocol as well as a staggered, physically distant move-in schedule.

Winter Sports

Another exciting update – with the South Atlantic Conference’s decision to hold winter sports’ competition, some of our Queens athletes will return to campus early to prepare and train. Our men’s and women’s basketball teams, men’s and women’s swim teams, and our wrestling team are in the process of moving back to campus this month.

Campus Changes

While you have been away, we have been preparing campus for a safe experience when you return, including:

- Adding signage to support a physically distant traffic flow in and out of our buildings
- Determining the appropriate capacity of every classroom
- Installing plexiglass barriers in offices where face-to-face interactions are necessary
- Upfitting our classrooms with additional technology to enhance the hybrid learning experience
- Equipping the campus with sanitizing resources
- Establishing campus protocols for keeping you safe including testing, tracing, and quarantine

What Can You Do?

You may be wondering what you should be doing to prepare. For starters, you can [sign our community covenant](#). This is our promise to each other to take the necessary measures to keep our community healthy. Every student will need to do this before they move into the residence halls or come to campus for the first time. Every employee will need to complete this form as well.

You can also [bookmark our daily symptom checker](#) as you will each need to get in the habit of taking a temperature check and completing this questionnaire every day before you leave your dorm room or come to campus. We believe these measures are critical to a successful implementation of our Royal Return plan so we can all have a safe, productive spring semester together on campus.

If you are at higher risk for severe outcomes from COVID-19, please let us know so we can make appropriate accommodations. Students should send a message to studentsuccess@queens.edu. Employees should email orsinit@queens.edu.

As promised, we will continue to provide monthly updates as we work toward the spring semester and roll out the specifics of Royal Return 2.0.

Sincerely,
Daniel Lugo