

July 31, 2020

Granite State College

COVID-19 Planning Executive Summary

With approximately 90% of our academic engagement and support for students already being delivered via technology prior to the pandemic, with staff having just completed a review of departmental Continuity of Operations Plans, and with several colleagues already operating remotely under new “Flexible Work Options” guidance from Human Resources, Granite State College (GSC) was uniquely positioned to respond effectively to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On January 29, 2020 President Rubinstein convened the College Emergency Group (CEG) to begin preparations for the possibility of a pandemic disease outbreak. Since that time, the College has benefited from the work of Peter Conklin, Director of Facilities, Safety, and Sustainability, and Maggie Hyndman, Assistant Vice President for Human Resources, whose efforts have allowed the College’s planning efforts to remain well-informed by information and guidance from New Hampshire Department of Health & Human Services, the US Center for Disease Control & Prevention, and the Governor’s Office, and for our implementation of those plans to remain in accord with USNH policies and best practices for effective management of employees who are working remotely.

Throughout this event, the priorities of the College have been to protect the health and safety of the GSC community and to ensure continuity of operations on behalf of our students, faculty, staff, and the University System. From the outset, the College has worked hard to identify the best available information to inform our understanding of risk and to be proactive, creative, and proportionate in our actions. Based on available evidence, GSC staff and faculty are confident that we continue to meet the educational and service expectations of adult students in New Hampshire.

Planning responsibilities for the residential campuses (UNH, KSC, PSU) do not align well with GSC operations. GSC has no residential program, so the institutional concerns associated with dining halls, residence halls, athletics, student conduct, and other matters do not apply to GSC. But the planning categories outlining the efforts of the USNH Coordinating Committee are addressed in part below. GSC has an MOU with UNH Police & Emergency Management concerning safety, security, and emergency management, and the college will be relying on that relationship to address these responsibilities.

1. **Behavior, Enforcement and Education:** GSC has established a COVID-19 resource web page to keep our community informed of status changes and expectations concerning the pandemic response. GSC students do not present challenging behavioral concerns and our non-residential program does not have a significant role in student life. Conduct issues related to the pandemic response will be addressed to GSC Student Conduct system.
2. **Spacing, Cleaning, and Protection:** With GSC staff working remotely through December, GSC facilities services have been able to reduce overall cleaning schedules and pivot those resources towards targeted disinfection of high touch surfaces.

3. **Testing and Screening:** GSC students and staff are working and learning remotely through December, so this fall there will be no need for a broad testing program. Surveillance testing may be conducted on essential on-site staff in partnership with UNH Police & Emergency Management. GSC staff and students are expected to follow guidance from DHHS regarding testing protocols for the general population.
4. **Contact Tracing:** GSC will partner with UNH Police & Emergency Management for contact tracing resources.
5. **Isolation and Incident Management:** GSC staff and students are expected to follow DHHS guidance on quarantine and isolation, suspect or positive cases are not allowed in GSC facilities. GSC will partner with UNH Police & Emergency Management and other system resources to address incident management as necessary.

Timeline for Key Decisions (President Rubinstein in consultation with GSC's Cabinet and College Emergency Group (CEG):

- January 29, 2020 President Rubinstein convened the College Emergency Group (CEG)
- March 18, 2020: Initiated a College-wide remote work/education plan effective through April 30th. This plan included a timeline of April 15th to inform subsequent decisions.
- April 15, 2020: Extended the College-wide remote work/education plan through the end of GSC's Summer term through September 7th. Maggie Hyndman, Peter Conklin, and Richard Wiechert (USNH IT) address and resolve issues related to remote working conditions based on USNH Flexible Work Options policies.
- May 13, 2020: Extended the College-wide remote work/education plan to be effective through the end of the Fall term (14 December 2020) to avoid potential impacts of a "second wave" of the virus.
- July 1, 2020: Planned for continuation of fully online instruction for Winter 2021 term. Anticipate return to on-campus operations for some staff and full-time faculty in December 2020, but with the expectation that many GSC staff and full-time faculty members will continue to operate remotely, lessening the risk of exposure and spread that could affect the health and safety of individuals and the continuity of College operations.