

THE UNIVERSITY *of* MONTANA WESTERN

Montana Western COVID-19 Guidelines: Academic Year 2023-2024

Reviewed 9-11-23

The University of Montana Western is committed to providing high-quality instruction and a safe environment for students, staff, faculty, and our community. We are working closely with our county public health department and monitoring state and national health situations and will adjust guidance for our campus accordingly.

Below are key points regarding the UMW 2023-24 academic year:

Course Delivery

- We do not anticipate changes to our face-to-face course schedule or mode of instruction. We will continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation and will follow guidance from the Beaverhead County Public Health Department as needed.

COVID-19 Vaccinations

- Faculty, staff, and students are not required to be vaccinated against COVID-19. However, the CDC has said that the COVID-19 vaccine is an important tool to decrease transmission.
- For the latest information about COVID-19 vaccines and boosters, please visit the [CDC website](#).
- [Several providers in the community](#) offer vaccinations/boosters for interested individuals.
- UMW encourages all community members to consult with their healthcare provider regarding vaccinations or boosters.

Masks (effective as of 2-14-22)

- As the number of active COVID-19 cases continue to remain low in Beaverhead County, and in response to [guidance from the Montana Commissioner of Higher Education](#), our mask policy is as follows:
 - Face masks are recommended, **but not required**, for students, faculty, and staff in campus buildings at the University of Montana Western.
- Individuals who would like a mask can pick one up for free at the Bulldog Life Office in the basement of the SUB, or at offices in the Short Administration Building.
- Montana Western expects all faculty, students, and staff to be considerate and respectful to those that may, or may not, choose to wear a mask.
- This guideline may change in the future based on the current situation. Additional information will be provided regarding any changes to UMW's COVID-19 guidelines.

Class Attendance and Absences

- Individual faculty members set the attendance policies for their classes. For information about the attendance policy in a class, students should consult the course syllabus. In all cases, if a student will miss class for any reason, they should notify the instructor before the start of class.

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Testing

- Any individual experiencing cold or flu-like symptoms should stay home, avoid close interactions with others, and call their healthcare provider for guidance.

Social Distancing, Hygiene and Health Monitoring

- We encourage you to practice social distancing on campus and to please be mindful of others' personal space.
- At all times, good hygiene is important for our individual and community health.
- Students, faculty, and staff are strongly encouraged to wash their hands regularly and use hand sanitizer.
- Please cover coughs and sneezes.
- Please do not come to campus if you are sick, and contact your professor or supervisor to make arrangements for completing coursework or making work arrangement adjustments.

Quarantine & Isolation

- If you were exposed, quarantine and stay away from others when you have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19.
- If you are sick or test positive, isolate when you are sick or when you have COVID-19, even if you don't have symptoms.
- Please visit the CDC's website for their helpful [Isolation and Exposure Guidelines and Calculator](#) to help you determine if you need to isolate or take other steps to prevent spreading COVID-19.
- The University of Montana Western no longer offers isolation housing for students. It is recommended that students limit their exposure to others by staying in their residence hall room for the recommended period of time. If a student is able to travel home or isolate off-campus, it is recommended they do so.
- Tips to prevent the spread of COVID-19 while isolating in the residence halls:
 - Wear a mask.
 - Avoid face-to-face interactions.
 - Wash your hands often.
 - Avoid common areas.
 - If you need additional support, please contact your RA or the Bulldog Life Office for further guidance and to request meals to be dropped off at your door.

Mental Health Resources

- Please visit our [student counseling website](#) for helpful information and online mental health resources in addition to in-person and online counseling sessions for students. We are here for you and please don't hesitate to contact us!
- If you are a student at Montana Western and would like to make an online or in-person appointment, please contact 406-683-7181, or email counseling@umwestern.edu.

If you have any questions, please contact UMW COVID-19 Coordinator, Nicole Hazelbaker: nicole.hazelbaker@umwestern.edu or 406-683-7900.