

We are off to a fantastic start to the spring semester at Grand Canyon University. Not only are the number of active cases on campus at manageable levels, but we have opened up a public Point of Dispensing vaccination site on the east side of campus at 27th Avenue in which we have become part of the COVID-19 solution in Arizona.

We are also looking ahead to the summer and fall academic calendars at GCU with a goal to return the campus environment, both inside and outside the classroom, back to normal. More information on that is below, along with information on how the University will approach COVID vaccines and a reminder about GCU rules prohibiting marijuana on campus.

Summer 2021

GCU is expanding its face-to-face course offerings in the summer, especially in the sciences and engineering, to help students who delayed taking certain labs and other in-person classes during the pandemic. This ensures students can stay on track and won't be delayed in completing their academic programs.

Both in-person and online courses will be available when summer classes begin May 3. Check with your student services counselor for more details as it relates to your academic program, as well as the increased availability of summer housing for those taking classes during that time.

Fall 2021

The University is making plans for the fall semester that include a return to campus operations that are 100% back to normal. This includes fully in-person classes, a full Move-In and Welcome Week experience, and extracurricular activities such as Chapel, clubs and athletic events.

We will have backup plans in place if some level of limitations on activities are necessary depending on the severity of COVID-19 at the time, but we are hopeful that the increased availability of COVID vaccines and increased herd immunity by September will allow campus operations to return to normal.

The fall semester will begin on Tuesday, Sept. 7 – the day after Labor Day – for all students (more detailed information on Move-In and Welcome Week will be forthcoming). Classes will take place Monday-Tuesday-Wednesday of Thanksgiving week but will occur in an online format. This gives students the choice to stay on campus those three days or go home early for Thanksgiving break and take their classes remotely during that week.

COVID vaccines

COVID-19 vaccines are not mandatory for students or employees. Those are individual decisions that each person must make for themselves. Those who wish to receive the vaccine can become eligible by volunteering at GCU's public Point of Dispensing (POD) vaccine site. The POD will remain open as long as it is needed in Maricopa County.

Those who do not wish to receive the vaccine are also encouraged to volunteer for one of 900 spots needed every week at the POD.

Vaccine POD

GCU exceeded its goal of 500-800 vaccine doses per day within the first week of operation of the POD, and is now exceeding 1,000 doses per day.

Hours of operation have been extended to 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily (with the exception of Feb. 7) thanks to the incredible contributions of our faculty, staff and student volunteers.

The POD aligns perfectly with GCU's mission to serve its community, particularly those in our most vulnerable populations. We are making a difference in Arizona!

As a reminder, volunteer spots for non-clinical roles are open only to students, faculty and staff at this time.

COVID cases on campus

There are 51 active cases of COVID-19 among students on campus (less than 0.5% of the student population) and available capacity for quarantine or isolation in Canyon and Cypress halls is more than 80%. We're off to a good start.

With the Super Bowl this weekend (a potential event for large indoor gatherings) and upcoming three-day weekends, it is important for students to remain diligent about protecting themselves from the coronavirus.

All of our contact tracing efforts point to off-campus gatherings or activities indoors without face coverings (such as watching TV together for prolonged periods or taking long trips together in an enclosed vehicle) as common factors in contracting or spreading COVID-19.

Even with what looks like a promising future ahead of us as it relates to vaccine availability, please do not let up in your efforts to follow COVID safety protocols (mask wearing, physical distancing, frequent hand washing, etc.).

Marijuana reminder

Marijuana is now legal in Arizona after voters passed Proposition 207 in November. However, GCU remains committed to providing a drug-free campus and workplace environment. So while marijuana's legal status is changing, the sale, offer to sell, purchase, use, transfer or possession of marijuana will continue to be prohibited on campus. This includes all areas of the University and University events.

Violation of this policy will result in a code of conduct violation. Conduct violations can result in community service, fines, losing on-campus housing privileges and even suspension or expulsion from the University. It can also still be a criminal offense if an individual is under the age of 21 or for those over 21 if the possession is greater than the allotted amount.