



# FALL 2021 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

All planning conducted, decisions made, and actions taken by UL System institutions, collectively and individually, shall adhere to the following hierarchy of principles:

1. The health and safety of students, faculty, staff, and our communities are paramount.
2. The continuity of learning and research must be maintained, adapting to fulfill Principle 1 as appropriate and necessary.
3. The financial health and viability of the enterprise must be protected and are dependent upon the fulfillment of Principles 1 and 2.
4. The social, emotional, and economic welfare of our communities must be considered and are dependent upon the fulfillment of Principles 1, 2, and 3.

## VACCINES/MASKS

As you know, vaccines remain our most powerful tool to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. Upon full FDA approval, COVID-19 vaccination will be added to the schedule of required immunizations at all UL System member institutions for entering and continuing students. Like all required immunizations, students shall not be required to comply with the requirement if the student submits a written statement from a physician stating the vaccine is contraindicated for medical reasons or if the student submits a written dissent. Also, like all required immunizations, upon recommendation by the office of public health, unvaccinated students may be excluded from attendance in the event of an outbreak. All entering and continuing students should be notified of the new vaccine requirement as soon as practicable.

The updated guidance now recommends that vaccinated individuals wear masks indoors in communities of [substantial or high transmission](#). The entire state of Louisiana is currently classified as high transmission. Students, faculty, and staff shall wear masks in the classroom and indoor public spaces. Additional masking guidance may be implemented at the university as warranted by local conditions.

Each institution should continue to educate and inform students, faculty, and staff regarding vaccine efficacy and safety and provide ample access to vaccination. Widespread vaccination in our communities is a public health imperative. The authorized vaccines provide substantial protection against the virus, and especially against severe disease, hospitalization, and death. While data from CDC indicate “breakthrough” infection may be significantly more frequent with emerging variants, the personal protection against severe disease and death should be compelling. A recent edition of StraightTalk by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana included a chart showing correlations between vaccination and COVID-19 consequences that is illustrative of the importance:


