

August 27, 2021

Hello, Jewell Family:

As you know, William Jewell stepped forward as an industry leader in requiring vaccine for students and employees. This decision, endorsed by our Board of Trustees, has made it possible for us to welcome students to the 2021-2022 academic year safely and wisely—and for all of us to enjoy a more fulsome experience on The Hill.

I am pleased to share three pieces of news that reinforce the level of safety and preparedness we are experiencing on campus. As of today, 86% of our total population have initiated vaccination (and for reference, 91% of employees and 81% of students already are fully vaccinated). With completion of the second shot, we should achieve 85% full vaccination by the middle of September. Moreover, of the roughly 900 individuals tested on campus this month, we identified one positive asymptomatic case who is in isolation off campus. Finally, Clay County has seen two weeks of declining positive Covid cases.

When the Operational Planning Team recommended a renewed mask mandate, they specified that the mandate could be relaxed after August 31 if certain conditions were met. We now have met those conditions, and for this reason, I have determined that effective September 1 we will modify the mask mandate currently in place on campus to the following:

- Masks no longer are required indoors among vaccinated individuals when walking through campus buildings, when working in an office or carrel, when eating or drinking in public, or when interacting in groups consisting of other vaccinated individuals;
- Masks are required indoors for unvaccinated individuals at all times except when eating or drinking in public, bathing, sleeping, or engaging in strenuous physical activity, such as practicing or playing a sport;
- Faculty have the autonomy to require students to wear masks in class, per their syllabi;
- Any employee or student has the autonomy to wear a mask at any time.

We will require masks for audience members during Fall Convocation and require masks of all visitors to campus through September 15.

The GLVC Resocialization to Fall Sports document supersedes these guidelines regarding weekly testing, vaccination, and mask wearing of staff and students.

Please note that we will adjust this guidance if circumstances change—including if we see another surge, which likely would require us to reinstate the mask mandate, or if we see cases go down dramatically, which could allow us to end the mask mandate for all indoor activities.

We are able to take these steps because of our high vaccination rates and because we have had a very low positivity rate within our employee and student populations. I want to thank all of you who have shown a commitment to public health by getting vaccinated, thereby helping our Jewell Family to be safe on The Hill. I welcome your questions, and look forward to seeing all of us embrace a replete living, learning, and working experience on The Hill this fall.

With my best,  
Elizabeth MacLeod Walls

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**Elizabeth MacLeod Walls, Ph.D.**  
***President***