

Blue Ridge Community College
Institutional Plan for Offering In-Person Instruction and Campus Reopening
Updated for Spring 2021

While making decisions throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Blue Ridge Community College has relied heavily on the guidance of the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), the Governor's office, and a variety of state agencies, including the Virginia Community College System (VCCS). BRCC has, and will continue to, operate on the premise that only absolutely essential in-person activities will take place on campus and on college-owned or leased property, until such time as health experts deem in person interactions to be safe. While acknowledging that some instruction, services, and events cannot take place virtually, our primary motivation will remain focused on the health and safety of employees and students. **Therefore, for the Spring 2021 semester, the vast majority of our instruction, services and events will be delivered in online formats, with exceptions being made on a case by case basis for essential instruction, services or events that cannot be held in any other manner.** The above decision is the over-riding premise that governs the rest of this plan. In addition to the guidelines provided by the Governor and VDH, the College will also be guided by the published VCCS reopening protocols.

The following considerations will guide our decisions about which courses, programs and/or services will be allowed to take place in person during the Spring 2021 semester:

A. Repopulation of the Campus:

1. The BRCC President's Council constitutes the **membership of the COVID-19 coordination/campus team**. Discussion of reopening procedures are discussed in those meetings. Additional input has been provided through the standard governance committees of the College.
2. The Vice President of Finance and Administration, Ms. Cynthia Page, (pagec@brcc.edu, 540-453-2281) is responsible for coordinating **communication with the Central Shenandoah Health District (CSHD)**. The Director of Public Relations, Ms. Bridget Baylor (baylorb@brcc.edu, 540-453-2358), serves as the backup to the VP. Dr. Laura Kornegay, MD, MPH (laura.kornegay@vdh.virginia.gov, 540-283-5050) is the Health Director of the CSHD. BRCC will report confirmed cases to Dr. Kornegay, or other health department staff as directed.
3. **Only students enrolled in in-person programs, or those who need access to in-person specific services that have been approved to operate on campus will be allowed to come to campus.** Conditions for their return are specific to the programs and services they will need to access, and are outlined in a separate document available from the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services, Dr. Bob Young. At the start of every in-person credit and non-credit course, every student will be required to complete an updated [Student Health Safety Agreement](#). Students accessing in-person services will also complete the form. In addition, an online self-screening questionnaire will be administered before the beginning of each class session. Students who report symptoms or contact with an individual who has been tested positive for COVID-19 will be asked to leave campus and self-isolate for the recommended period of time indicated in the [Student Health Safety](#)

Agreement. To the extent possible, faculty will provide alternate instruction while the student is in isolation.

4. **Training of Students:** The education and training of our students about COVID-19 will take place via a training module in our CANVAS Learning Management System (LMS). Each credit BRCC Student has access to the LMS, and students will be assigned the training during the first class of every course. Non-credit students will be taught similar content during their first on campus meeting. Campus signage will also direct students to appropriate hand washing, the wearing of face masks, and social distancing protocols.
5. **Physical Distancing:**
 - a. **In classrooms:** Physical distancing is course and service specific and outlined in each faculty-developed in-person teaching plan approved by the Vice President. Each approved plan contains protocols based on the guidance provided in the VCCS "*Safe Reopening of Instructional Spaces*" document.
 - b. **Social distancing considerations outside the classroom:** Students and employees are discouraged from congregating and socializing while on campus. All are encouraged to leave campus promptly when not engaged in a course-related or work-related activity. The campus library, recreation center and bookstore will be closed, which will limit campus visitors. Visitors will be required to wear a facemask when on campus as per the Governor's directive. Signage with this information is posted on building doors. Most extracurricular activities will take place online, with very minimal exceptions made under the authority of the Vice Presidents and reported to the President. Campus dining facilities are closed through the Spring 2021 semester. At all times, guidance from the Governor, VDH and VCCS governs any in-person activities that may be allowed.
 - c. **Shared spaces:** Occupancy is consistent with the Governor's Executive Orders, VDH and VCCS guidance in place. Social distancing is enforced in all shared space areas that are allowed to open. In student study areas, selected seating areas are taped off to enforce students sitting six feet apart. Likewise, student study spaces are taped off or closed to enforce social distancing. Generous amounts of signage direct people to social distancing, face mask requirements and hand washing protocols. Elevator usage is restricted to one person at a time. The Recreation Center, library and cafeteria are closed and will reopen only when the Governor's Executive Orders, and VDH guidance allow.
 - d. **Limitations on gatherings:** Gatherings will not be permitted without the express written permission of one of the Vice Presidents. The President will make the overall determination when any gatherings will be permitted. When such gatherings are eventually permitted, they will be consistent with the Governor's Executive Orders, VDH and VCCS guidance in place at the time.
 - e. **Food/Dining Areas:** All dining areas are closed through the Spring 2021 semester. Reopening after that will depend upon the guidance in place at that time. BRCC does not offer any meal plans to students.
6. **Hygiene Practices and cleaning/disinfecting protocols:**
 - a. **Cleaning and disinfecting protocols:** Since most instruction is taking place on-line, only limited instructional areas are in use during the Spring 2021 semester. Contracted custodial personnel clean frequently used surfaces (e.g. doorknobs and

restrooms) once during the day and once overnight. Custodial staff also clean classrooms and common areas each night. The college maintains supplies of hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes and has them available in locations where in-person instruction is taking place. Hand sanitizers and disinfectant wipes are also available for use by employees and students in offices and hallways. The employees and students using on campus classrooms and labs will be provided with disinfectant wipes to clean surfaces after use. Trash cans are available in every room and in hallways throughout the campus.

- b. **Hand sanitizer and hand washing stations:** Each restroom has signage describing appropriate hand washing techniques. Hand sanitizer stations are located in every building throughout campus, and are checked frequently to ensure supplies are sufficient. Faculty and staff are also provided with hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes to clean office surfaces.
 - c. **Minimize shared objects and ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing to the extent possible (e.g. dedicated student supplies, lab equipment, computers, etc.):** On campus, in-person, instruction will be limited to those courses or portions of courses that cannot be taught online. In those few courses, students and faculty will clean and sanitize lab equipment or hand tools after each use. The College will provide cleaning and disinfecting supplies.
7. **Housing:** Not Applicable. Blue Ridge Community College does not provide campus housing.
8. **Consideration of Vulnerable Individuals:**
- a. The majority of students will be taking online classes. If a vulnerable student is in a program where in-person instruction is required, then the student will choose whether to continue in the program with the associated risks, or to defer their enrollment to a later semester. The majority of BRCC employees will be teleworking during the Spring 2021 semester. If the physical presence of a vulnerable employee is deemed to be essential, the impacted employee may choose to be assigned other duties or take appropriate leave.
 - b. **Flexible sick leave policies** will remain in effect until DHRM guidance advises otherwise. Employees who are sick will be encouraged to stay home.
 - c. **Return after COVID-19:**
 - i. **Students:** If a student has symptoms of COVID-19, or has been exposed to someone with COVID-19, they will follow the guidance outlined in the BRCC [Student Health Safety Agreement](#).
 - ii. **Employees:** All employees will complete the Employee Health Safety Agreement.
 - a. Consistent with CDC guidelines, if an employee has symptoms of COVID-19, they will be allowed to return to work when:
 - There has been at least 3 days with no fever without the use of fever reducing medications, AND
 - Symptoms are resolved, AND
 - There has been 10 days since symptoms first appeared.If the employee chooses to have a COVID-19 test and share it with the College, they may return immediately if and when the test shows a negative result.
 - b. If an employee tested positive for COVID-19, they may be allowed to return to work when:

- There has been 14 days since they were tested AND
 - All symptoms are resolved for at least 24 hours prior
- c. If an employee becomes aware that they have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19, they will be expected to stay home for 10 days after exposure and no symptoms occur. If symptoms occur, see section (a). No employee will be required to provide a COVID-19 test result or healthcare provider note to validate their illness, qualify for appropriate sick leave, and/or return to work, provided they follow the established return-to-work guidance.

9. International student considerations:

a. BRCC anticipates **3-5 international students** in the Spring 2021 semester.

b. Guidance:

- i. BRCC adheres to the guidance from the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP), which is a unit within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security that oversees the F-1 international student visa program. Due to the rapidly evolving situation with COVID-19, SEVP issued guidance to universities that allows for increased flexibility to ensure international students can continue their academic progress. Colleges can implement temporary adjustments such as moving to online instruction without negatively impacting the immigration status of enrolled international students.
- ii. The current guidance from SEVP allows for flexibility until the end of the summer sessions. We are waiting for further guidance about Spring 2021 to determine enrollment options for international students and implications for F-1 students' immigration status.

c. COVID-19 Travel health risks.

- i. Currently, travel restrictions and entry screening apply only to travelers arriving from some countries or regions with widespread ongoing spread of COVID-19.
- ii. Students may be screened when they arrive in the United States. After arrival, students should stay at home and avoid contact with others. Students should not go to school for 10 days and should monitor health during that time.

10. Communications with local community, health systems, and other stakeholders: The College communicates directly with the Central Shenandoah Health District and local health care facilities on COVID-19 related issues. Communication with students, employees, boards, and the external community are done by updating the [BRCC COVID-19 website](https://www.brcc.edu/brcc/news/coronavirus.html) (<https://www.brcc.edu/brcc/news/coronavirus.html>). In addition, the College sends emails, provides updates on official social media pages, and holds Zoom meetings with employees and students. The BRCC emergency notification system is employed if circumstances warrant.

11. Face coverings: Most instruction will take place on-line for the Spring 2021 semester. BRCC will provide cloth face masks to all employees required to work on campus. Employees will be directed on proper use and maintenance of cloth face masks. Students will be directed to obtain their own face covering and to wear them when they are on campus. Disposable masks will be available for student use if they did not bring their own

mask to campus. BRCC will follow the guidance of VCCS, DHRM, VDH and CDC regarding actions to follow if students or employees refuse to wear face coverings.

12. **Student Health Services:** Not applicable. BRCC does not provide any campus health services, and students will be directed to call their local medical provider for additional services.
13. **Large Events.** No large events are permitted until such events are authorized by the Governor. If such events are authorized, appropriate social distancing protocols in place at the time will be followed.
14. **Communications Strategy.** Communication with students, employees, boards, and the external community are done by updating the [BRCC COVID-19 website](https://www.brcc.edu/brcc/news/coronavirus.html) (<https://www.brcc.edu/brcc/news/coronavirus.html>), which is prominently linked from the BRCC home page. This web page includes health information and links to resources related to the COVID-19 pandemic, information about COVID-19 symptoms, the College's response to the pandemic, as well as changes in classes, campus activities, and student services. In addition, the College sends emails, provides updates on official social media pages, and holds Zoom meetings with employees and students. Signage is placed throughout campus with information about requirements for entry to buildings and contact information to acquire on-line services. The BRCC emergency notification system, which contacts students, employees and others via email and/or text will be employed in appropriate circumstances.
15. **Orientation and education:** Blue Ridge Community College will provide professional development opportunities for faculty and staff. In addition, orientation and education will take place for employees during the in-service professional development activities a week prior to classes starting. Student training, including anti-stigma training, will take place via a module in the CANVAS Learning Management System. Faculty will inform students about the availability of this training.

B. Monitoring Health Conditions

1. **Screening questions:** At the start of every in-person credit and non-credit course, every student will be required to complete an updated [Student Health Safety Agreement](#). Students accessing in-person services will also complete the form. In addition, an online self-screening questionnaire will be administered before the beginning of each class session. Students who report symptoms or contact with an individual who has been tested positive for COVID-19 will be asked to leave campus and self-isolate for the recommended period of time indicated in the Student Health Safety Agreement. To the extent possible, faculty will provide alternate instruction while the student is in isolation. Any employees who come to campus will also complete an online self-screening questionnaire before reporting to campus.
2. **Campus level disease surveillance:** BRCC does not provide health services to its students. Should any student or staff member who has recently been on campus contract COVID-19, the college will inform the local VDH office for support. In addition, cases impacting campus will be reported to the VCCS.
3. **Testing Strategy:** BRCC is not a residential college. It will follow VDH guidance (<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/health-professionals/vdh-updated-guidanceon-testing-for-covid-19/>) and will contact VDH to determine the need for testing students or employees. The college will coordinate any necessary communications to students and employees with the VDH. If students or employees request information about COVID-19

testing, the college will direct them to the VDH testing site locator at <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-testing/covid-19-testing-sites> so they may find a testing site close to them.

C. Containment to Prevent Spread

1. **Partnership with VDH for contact tracing:** BRCC will participate with the department of health to provide contact tracing information to the fullest extent possible. The Vice President for Finance and Administration, Ms. Cynthia Page, (pagec@brcc.edu, 540-453-2281) will coordinate with the VDH for contact tracing.
2. **Quarantining and isolation:** The campus does not have dormitories or a health center, and therefore, no safe location where a student or employee may quarantine. Students and employees must find a suitable off campus location to quarantine themselves. Students are directed to quarantine if they report they have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, have traveled to an area with high incidence of COVID-19, or are diagnosed with COVID-19. Employees will follow the same protocols.
3. **Campus outbreak management:** As students and employees are allowed on campus, they will be encouraged to restrict movement only to locations necessary for them to access in-person course or service. Students and employees will be discouraged from congregating and socializing. If BRCC becomes aware of a confirmed COVID-19 case on campus, the College will immediately report the case to the local health department and will work with the local health department to monitor any potential campus outbreak. The College will determine if any or all classes and activities need to be cancelled or if any or all campus facilities need to be closed, and for what period of time. The College will communicate to all stakeholders of any decisions to suspend classes and activities or close facilities.
4. **Partnership with local health systems:** BRCC will partner with the local health department and follow applicable guidelines they request us to follow. The Vice President for Finance and Administration, Ms. Cynthia Page (pagec@brcc.edu, 540-453-2281), will be the primary contact with the VDH.

D. Shutdown considerations:

1. **Criteria and plans for shutting down:** If BRCC is notified that an individual who had been on campus has tested positive for COVID, the College will determine as quickly as possible where the individual had been on campus. Those areas will be evacuated and closed immediately and will not reopen until cleaned and disinfected. The regional health department will be notified immediately for further guidance. If the College is unable to determine where the individual had been on campus, the campus will be closed until cleaning and disinfecting can take place. With each subsequent case, the same steps will be taken: review the case, consult with the department of health, and decide what actions are needed. If a shutdown is required, the campus community and other stakeholders will be notified via email, message alert, and social media.
2. **Nature of reduced campus activity:** Blue Ridge Community College will return to 100% online instruction with no meetings or activities on campus if conditions warrant.
3. **Student health on campus versus at home:** Blue Ridge Community College does not have a health care center. Any student or employee with symptoms of any illness will be asked to call their local health care provider and follow their directions.
4. **Communications plan for dismissal/shutdown.** Any decision to shutdown would be disseminated to students, employees, boards, and the external community by updating the

[BRCC COVID-19 website](https://www.brcc.edu/brcc/news/coronavirus.html) (https://www.brcc.edu/brcc/news/coronavirus.html). In addition, the College sends emails, provides updates on official social media pages, and holds Zoom meetings with employees and students to keep them informed about any changes associated with campus operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, the College has an emergency notification software system that distributes important messages to members of the College community who have registered to receive such notifications.