

SU to Transition to Remote Instruction for First 2 Weeks of Fall Semester

Dear Stevenson Students,

Since April, the university has been planning for our return to campus. I am grateful to the faculty, staff, and administrators who have worked with great dedication to design our plans and approaches. As part of our effort, the university is testing students who are returning to campus for COVID-19. The results of our first three days of testing are in and there were 45 positive tests out of 337 total tests. This represents a positivity rate of 13.3%. All students who tested positive are being asked to isolate at home, and contact responders are identifying the close contacts of the students who tested positive and they are being asked to quarantine at home.

Given this positivity rate and the public health risks it may pose, we consulted with the Baltimore County Department of Health regarding appropriate steps to protect the health and safety of our campus community, and we will be pursuing three important steps:

1. **Classes and co-curricular activities will be online for at least the first two weeks of the semester.** Offsite instruction will proceed as scheduled (e.g. clinicals, internships, field placement, etc.) and in compliance with the rules established by the partner organization. Further details will be provided to students by the Provost in a separate communication.
2. **Move-in to the Residence Halls will stop as of 6 PM August 27th.** An exception process is being established for students who need to move into the residence halls after August 27th for academic or hardship reasons.
3. **Students who are currently in the Residence Halls will be asked to return to their homes if feasible,** and the Office of Student Affairs will be in touch with students regarding the move out process. An exception process is being established for students who need to remain in the Residence Halls for academic or hardship reasons.

We realize this is a great disappointment to the students and families who have looked forward to a fully on-campus experience this fall. It is equally disappointing to the hundreds of faculty, staff, and friends of the university who have worked diligently over the last several months to prepare the campus to welcome our new and returning students. We all look forward to the return of a normal, active campus life, but the realities of COVID-19 remain and we must be resilient.

Despite this disappointment, I am inspired by the work that our faculty and staff have done over the summer to prepare for remote instruction and I am confident in their ability to deliver a very high quality academic program. Faculty advisors and Student Success Coaches, Career Connections advisors, and other academic services staff are fully prepared to provide support and guidance to our students remotely.

In the spirit of resilience that defines Stevenson University, we will use the next two weeks to examine alternate testing strategies and review our safety procedures and processes to determine ways to reduce the prevalence of COVID-19 in our campus community. We will pursue these efforts with optimism and determination because, even in the most difficult moments, this is the Stevenson Way.

We have compiled the following brief FAQ below my signature line to address some questions you may have at this time.

Please take care of yourself and each other in this challenging time, and remember that Stevenson is here to support you.

Sincerely,

Elliot Hirshman
President

FAQs

How will this affect the start of classes on Monday, August 31?

Classes will begin as originally scheduled on Monday, August 31, but will be taught remotely. All of our faculty are prepared to provide remote instruction.

How will this affect my move-in plans?

Students who were planning to move in to campus on Friday, August 28 and through the weekend should remain at home. The Office of Residence Life & Housing will be in touch in the coming week regarding alternate move-in plans.

What if I am currently living on campus?

The Office of Residence Life & Housing will be in touch with students currently living on campus with information and guidance for moving out or requesting exceptions for this the period of remote instruction.

Will I receive a housing refund?

Students who would have been living on campus during this time will receive housing and/or meal plan refunds. The Office of Students Accounts will reach out to you in the coming weeks with information about the refund process.

Should staff work from home or on campus?

Staff who have been working remotely should continue to work remotely and essential staff assigned to work on campus should continue to work on site. Other employees, especially those who have been working in a hybrid fashion, partly on campus and remotely, should contact their supervisors for direction.

Can faculty teach remotely from campus?

Faculty will have access to buildings, their offices, classrooms, and labs so they can teach remotely from these locations if they need to.

Further questions?

Please contact us at covid19questions@stevenson.edu if you have additional questions.