

WSU Parent Information Forum – June 4

PHIL WEILER: Well, good evening, everyone. Welcome to Washington State University's parent information forum for both parents and supporters of future Cougs. My name is Phil Weiler. I'm vice president for marketing and communications here at Washington State University. And I want to start by saying thank you for joining us. We have well over, I believe, 1,000 folks who have signed up for today. And so I think it's going to be a great session. Lots of questions that people have. We really want to be able to try and get to as many of those as we can this evening.

Tonight's session is the second out of a series of three public forums that we're doing for parents to answer questions. And again, these are specifically for families and supporters of incoming first time WSU students. Each session, we're going to have a slightly different panel, so that we can provide the most timely information and as well hopefully the most useful information for you.

Tonight, we're going to be hearing from a panel of campus leaders. We have from the provost office Bryan Slinker. We have from student affairs Jill Creighton, from our global campus Dave Cillay. And from academic advising, we have Terese King. I'll do a little bit more of an introduction for all of them in a moment. But I just want to give you an idea of who's on the screen with us now.

In addition to our panelists, as I said, we asked folks to submit questions in advance. As of yesterday, we had 700 questions. We've received more in the last 24 hours. So a lot of interest that people have. We'll do our best to get through as many of those as we can.

One thing I'll say, though, is if you look at the live chat, I've got on a machine here on the side, I have the YouTube channel up, we do have a whole cadre of staff who are subject matter experts who are managing the live chat. If you have a question, feel free to post it there. We'll do our best to be able to answer it in real-time or at least refer you to resources where you can get the answer that you need.

Before we get started, I want to acknowledge that this is a particularly difficult time to be a parent of a young person who's getting ready to go away for college. I know that your seniors had their senior year thrown into turmoil. It's not the way they wanted to end their high school career.

And now on top of that, we as a nation are trying to deal with 400 years of racial injustice in our country. And this makes it a really difficult time for all of us but especially for you as parents because we know that you do have questions. We know that you're concerned about your young person's future. And so hopefully, tonight, we can at least put some of those questions-- answer some of those questions for you and put some of your concerns about life in the fall to rest.

So with that, let me just do a little bit more of an introduction, if I could. As I mentioned, Dr. Bryan Slinker, he's our interim provost and executive vice president. For those of you not familiar with the title provost, he's essentially our chief academic officer.

I also introduced a second ago Dr. Jill Creighton. Jill's the associate vice president and dean of students in the division of student affairs. Next, we have Dr. Dave Cillay. He's the chancellor of our WSU global campus. Our global campus is the online campus. He's also vice president for academic outreach and innovation. There's a lot of information Dave's going to be able to share with us about how we were able to make that shift this last spring from in-person instruction to online. It went very smoothly for us at WSU. And it was due in great part because of Dave and his team.

And then finally, we have Dr. Terese King. Terese is the executive director of the university advising. And she's also the director of academic success and career center. So with that, let me turn it over to Bryan. And, Bryan, if you could share with us, what's the latest information about what plans are in the fall?

BRYAN SLINKER: Welcome, everyone. And thank you. I echo everything Phil just said. It's a tough time for us all in this. On top of everything else, this nasty disease has disrupted us all, some more than others. And we all find ourselves trying to adapt as best we can in an extremely challenging environment.

And as we plan for the fall, we're going to be able to give some general answers to what we're thinking and some general parameters about what fall looks like. But yes, we are planning on in-person experiences. They will not all look like they would have in a pre-COVID-19 world. And we're committed as a system to bringing students back to campus.

Having said that, safety is our primary consideration for your students and for ourselves and for our communities. We're a system across the state. We're embedded in different communities. In Pullman, one of the really delights of being a Cougar in Pullman is the small campus life. But we're embedded in that community, and we owe that community a commitment to keep them safe as well, the community that we live in.

So our students, our employees, our communities, we want to keep people safe. And our decisions will be driven by that safety through science, what we know about the science, what public health advice we're getting. Our decisions are going to be driven by the desire to provide a high quality educational experience regardless of the method of delivery. And Phil mentioned how academic outreach and innovation, our deep bench there allowed us to pivot the spring and with more planning over the summer improve our ability to deliver by a variety of methods.

We do have a desire to return to campus life, including in Pullman residential life. And all of our desires and plans for safety and return to campus life are set in the need to get guidance and

approval from state and local governments for what we're allowed to do. So that's the general planning frame.

And we all share a frustration in not knowing yet what all the answers are for the fall semester. There are many moving parts here. And they change dynamically. But I'll let others talk about some of these aspects.

But in the area of academic affairs that I lead, our primary consideration is, what does the semester look like from an instruction standpoint? And we will almost certainly have distance education for our larger enrollment classes. What larger is still under discussion. But likely, any class with an enrollment over 50 or most classes will be primarily distance delivery.

Smaller classes less than 50 will be a mix. And some might use mixed modalities, some face-to-face mixed with some distance in creative pedagogy, such as what is known as flipping the classroom. So we can't tell you which class yet will be face-to-face, flipped. But we can tell you that most classes over an enrollment of 50 will be distance.

And where we have classroom inventory, a lot of details to work through. So I can't tell you which class. And I know that's going to be frustrating for your students. And we will get specific classes announced as soon as we can. Right now, students should register for the class schedule as currently exists.

The other thing under discussion, and again, we've made no firm decision. But we have a desire to not necessarily shorten the semester but reduce the student population in Pullman. And again, this is more Pullman specific but may be true of other campus locations after Thanksgiving, so that students don't leave and come back. That will be probably very important in our commitment to keeping everyone safe.

But exactly that looks like, we don't know. We know there are other concerns that you will have about, can you stay if you want? And the answer is probably yes in some measure. How will it affect your housing costs? There is a variety of questions that you have legitimately. And we'll get you those answers. But we think it's going to be safer for everybody if we start having fewer students on our campuses, particularly in Pullman, after Thanksgiving.

So I'll stop it there with, again, a general commitment to safety, high quality education, regardless of how we deliver it, and decisions driven by our desires to have as much of a return to campus life as we can within those safety guidelines. I'll turn it back to you, Phil.

PHIL WEILER: Great. Thank you, Bryan. Jill, I'm going to turn the next set of questions over to you. One of the things that we saw a lot in the questions that were submitted in advance and questions that I'm seeing right now coming through on the chat have to do with housing. Now I know that those housing decisions are not ours alone to make. And I know that it's probably premature for us to be able to have all the answers in place, but share with us what you can about what housing options are going to look like in the fall.

JILL CREIGHTON: Thanks, Phil. And I know that this is the number one question on many families' minds right now. Where is my student going to be living in the fall? We are not alone in making our decisions. And I know that we've seen some of our other state schools in the area make decisions on their housing.

We're waiting for some additional guidance from our state and local health officials before we can announce the plan for the fall semester. And we do hope to be able to do that in the month of June. That would include information on our housing density. That will include information on roommate assignments if those become available and will include information on potential move in.

And so there's a lot of questions that we're still waiting for good guidance on. And it's really important for us to make housing decisions that reflect the best options for our students to succeed in their learning and also remain physically distant when able within the campus community. So again, we just really appreciate everyone waiting. And we will continue to give updates as they become available. Those will be announced via email for students who have signed up for housing and at housing.wsu.edu.

PHIL WEILER: Great. Thank you, Jill. Dave,

BRYAN SLINKER: Dave, I want to send the next question to you. As I mentioned in the introduction, WSU, in my opinion at least, was uniquely positioned to be able to make that switch from face-to-face to distance learning, in part, because of the deep history we have in online education and our global campus. I'd love to have you talk a little bit about what is the history of the global campus and then how did your academic outreach and innovation team help faculty members prepare for that change when we learned that we need to do that. Because as we heard from Bryan a second ago, we will be doing classes face-to-face when and where we can, but there may be some courses that need to be taught in a distance format. So give us a little bit of history about how WSU has been in that space. I think you're on mute, Dave.

DAVE CILLAY: Washington State's been a leader in online education for, really, the last two decades. US News and World Report ranked us in the top 10% of universities who deliver undergraduate degrees through online technology. We were actually one of the first universities in the country to offer a degree at a distance, which was almost three decades ago. So we've been at this for some time.

And we've got a very robust suite of support services for students anywhere from online tutoring, library services, career counseling, tech support advising. We really can support students who never set foot on a physical campus. We also can support students that do a mixed modality, where they're on campus, but they're still using tools to engage in some part of their courses. So we've got a lot of support resources for your kids.

As we pivoted from face-to-face to online this last spring, we made that transition in two weeks, where we had 700 faculty go through trainings before the start of spring and then another 300 who went through support trainings throughout the spring semester. So we had 1,000 faculty who engaged in workshops, training support services, one-on-one. And the thing that I'm excited about is we had two weeks to make that change.

Right now, we've got three months to plan for the fall. We've got 400 faculty who are engaged in some cohort training around specific topics that they want to incorporate to support students in, as Bryan said, various modes of delivery. Some of that's face-to-face. Some of that's going to be flipped. Some of that's going to be uniquely online.

And so we have a lot of support for faculty. And we also have a lot of support for students. On our learning innovation site, which is part of the academic outreach innovation, there are pages dedicated just to students and how to use the technology and navigate the environment.

PHIL WEILER: Great. Thank you, Dave. Terese, one of the things that is coming up right around the corner is going to be our new student orientation sessions known as Alive. Can you talk to us a little bit about what does Alive look like, what people should expect, what's the best way for students to get the most out of Alive sessions. And we'll stop there. And I've got other questions for you in a moment. But let's focus on Alive first.

TERESE KING: OK. Great. Thanks. Well, we're really excited to greet our incoming class, our new students and parents and supporters of students through the Alive program. We actually have our first session for our Hawaii students and out-of-state students this Saturday coming up. And then our Pullman sessions will be the following week.

Alive is really an event to not only welcome you into the Cougar family but help you take care of some of those sorts of businessy things that need to happen before you can actually be in the classroom on the first day. So we have student orientation counselors that are going to lead students through the sessions virtually online, do different activities. One of the goals of the Alive program is to help build community among the students. And we can certainly do that virtually as well as in-person.

We want to make sure that students are connecting with other students. If they don't know other students when they're coming to WSU, we want to make sure that they've met somebody besides their orientation counselor. They're going to be in groups of about 12 to 15 students and working throughout the day in different workshops.

Some of the students will attend workshops based on what their own personal interests are. Maybe they want to learn how to get involved. Maybe they're interested in on-campus employment. So lots of different workshops like that.

And of course, students have lots of questions about how their credits transfer. If they're part of Running Start programs or their AP exams and want to know what classes they'll be taking in

the fall, so we have academic advisors lined up to work with students throughout the program. For parents, we have a lot in store for you as well, getting a lot of your questions answered.

And to put the orientation program together in-person and online, we have over 450 students and staff and faculty at the university to gather together to make one program happen. So we're pretty excited. I'm getting really excited for the program to start.

PHIL WEILER: Great. I love the Alive sessions. I think that is the first, in my mind, it's sort of one of the first introductions for students to what life at a university is going to be like. So for those parents who have students who are signed up, I think they'll have a great opportunity to learn more about WSU and really get excited for next year.

Bryan, I'm looking at some of the comments we're seeing in live chat. And there's still interest about COVID-19 and what is that going to mean for WSU as we prepare. And wonder if you could talk a little bit about this a little bit about nuts and bolts kind of question. But WSU has some infectious disease experts who are members of our faculty who are doing work around modeling. And I wonder if you could share some information about who that group is, what they do, and how we might be able to take their expertise to make sure that our students, faculty, and staff are safe in the fall.

BRYAN SLINKER: Sure, Phil. Happy to address that as a scientist. I'm always happy to talk science. So COVID-19 is caused by a coronavirus, as most of you know, an unusual set of viruses that typically may cause the common cold, different coronaviruses. But this one's special. This one, we're still trying to figure out, which is what makes it a little harder to plan because we learn more and more as time goes on.

But the key to returning to campus life in terms of what classrooms we feel safe to have students in for face-to-face, how we occupy dorms, how we open up common facilities such as the rec center, how we do that safely depends on the biology of the virus. It depends on how much disease we have in our population. And so our goal in Whitman County, for example, we do not have a lot of COVID-19. We don't want to bring a lot of it in.

But we have four infectious disease modeling experts on our faculty, two from our Spokane campus and two based in Pullman. And they were working with one of our national academy members, who is also an infectious disease scientist. And so I can go to them with a question like, we want to achieve this goal. We want to know, what's it going to take to keep students safe if we have classes of this size?

Or Jill, vice president Gonzales on the student affairs can go to the team and say, if we had a goal to have this type of occupancy in our dorms, what do we need to do to keep students safe? And the tools for biosecurity are going to be the same as for any business. Whether it's a Boeing or any other business, we have tools.

We need to have people stay home if they're sick. We need to have basic hygiene and sanitation, disinfection of surfaces. But we also cannot keep this many people safe when they return to campus unless we also have testing for the virus itself. And a strategy to do that periodically to surveil our population.

And we know talking with other infectious diseases experts, other universities that are considering the same thing that we are, that we can do this. That there are strategies for testing, contact tracing if there are positive tests. And the testing strategy is designed to keep the number of positive tests low, so that we can effectively contact trace, and keep the disease tamped down. So that's the core of a strategy is a testing strategy. And the modelers can tell us what that's going to look like.

And then we have other tools then like the attestation, wearing facial coverings, maintaining social distancing. We're even doing things to try to maintain social distancing, controlling traffic patterns. Some of you may have been in retail establishments where the aisles in the grocery store are now one way to reduce interactions of people. We're considering the same kinds of things.

So this gets down in the weeds pretty far, but we don't have really a different toolkit than anybody else has to work with. We have the modelers to help us know how to deploy that toolkit to keep everyone safe. And does safe mean nobody is going to get sick? That's not what safe means in this environment. Safe means almost nobody is going to get sick, and we can keep the disease really tamped down and it doesn't spread widely.

PHIL WEILER: Great. Thank you, Bryan. Jill, I'm looking again at the chat function. And we're getting some questions that people have about fraternity and sorority life. Greek life is definitely a feature of the WSU Pullman campus. And there are folks who are just wondering, what is that going to look like in the fall?

I know that the Greek houses are not controlled by WSU. But my guess is that you've been in touch with those folks. So I'd love to hear what you have to say about the meetings you've had with the Greek representatives.

JILL CREIGHTON: If you or your student are interested in becoming a member of one of our fraternities and sororities, registration is currently open for both Pan-Hellenic and Interfraternity Council recruitment processes in the fall. So please check out the Senate for Fraternity and Sorority Life website. I believe it's cfsl.wsu.edu, and you can get all the details about signing up for recruitment.

Our team is working incredibly hard right now to look at how to translate what is typically a 1,000 plus person process to a process that is safe for our students to engage in. So our team is doing an amazing job of trying to figure out what that looks like. And I want to give a lot of credit to our undergraduate student leaders, who are trying to translate that experience into our current modality.

So with all of that said, I know that housing in our fraternities and sororities is another question. And as you mentioned, Phil, we do not own or operate the fraternity or sorority houses. We do have a very strong relationship with all of the housing corps organizations. And I was able to meet with them personally just this week to talk about what density might look like in the fraternity and sorority houses.

They are faced with some of the same questions that we're faced with in the residence halls in terms of what is the plan for density occupation, what can they do regarding dining and make sure that that is safe, what does gathering look like inside of those spaces. Some of our sororities-- I shouldn't say some. All of our sororities last year had an average membership of over 200 women. And that 200 number is higher than what our current health guidance says we can be all in one space for. So we're having to figure out those questions as we go along.

Whitman County public health is involved in those discussions as well. And we are anticipating some additional guidance from the state level on what we can do in that area. So again, we're hoping for some things later in the month of June, and I'm looking forward to being able to get everyone some more concrete information.

PHIL WEILER: Great. Thank you, Jill. Dave, next question to you. I'm curious if you can give us a little bit more detail about what a hybrid class looks like. I know Bryan had talked about we'll be doing probably some sort of hybrid learning in the fall. And then this sort of segues into a question that one of the parents posted earlier questioning, will my student be asked to sit in front of a computer from 8 AM to 4 PM every day? And how can you do that and stay sane? So can you talk a little bit about what the hybrid classroom looks like and what your experience is when students are using an online method of learning? How does that work for them? And what's the difference between a synchronous versus an asynchronous class, for example?

DAVE CILLAY: Sure. So one of the models we've been talking about for the hybrid courses is really tied to the size of classrooms and making sure that we don't overcommit students into a physical space. And so one of the models we're looking at is let's say we have a classroom that can seat 80 students, and we've got 60 students enrolled in that class. One model would be we would build online learning modules.

And maybe on Monday, 1/3 of the class would attend the physical classroom, interact with the faculty member. And 2/3 of the students would engage those online modules, whether they're synchronous or asynchronous. And then on Wednesday, a different 1/3 of students would come. This would all be coordinated, of course. A different 1/3 of students would come on Wednesday. And then the other 2/3 would interact with the online modules. And then Friday, the final 1/3 would attend and have that interactive engaged experience.

There are so many different flavors of flipped and hybrid and flexible enrollment courses. That's one example. The faculty are being very creative in how they take their unique course and the expectations of those courses and then build the online components, whether it's synchronous or asynchronous into that design for the fall.

In terms of sitting in front of a computer from 8:00 to 4:00, I don't see that as a reality. We're going to have a number of asynchronous options. And one of the options with asynchronous is, although you're still built around a schedule, that schedule is built around days rather than an hour in a day. So you may have an assignment, something that you have to engage in, and that material, that interaction is online. And you may have two or three days to engage in that activity.

So the students can spread out the time that they're actively engaged in their asynchronous course. There are going to be some synchronous courses that are going to require students to be at a set place at a set time. But there's going to be a mix of those as we roll through the semester.

PHIL WEILER: Great. Thanks, Dave. So, Terese, a lot of questions that I'm seeing both, again, previously submitted and some in the live chat having to do with questions about advising. How do students select classes? When do they go about selecting their classes for the fall? So can you talk a little bit about that for us?

TERESE KING: Sure. So as students get close to their orientation session that they've registered for, new student programs and the Alive staff are going to send out links to the students ahead of time on some prerecordings that they can watch that gets them primed for the information and conversations that they're going to be having with their academic advisors. We spent some time talking to them about the core curriculum that they'll be taking that all students take, which we call UCORE. It's similar to the general education that students are used to from high school, where they have to take so many math and so many writing and that sort of thing. So we talk about that.

And then during the program, we're going to have live sessions with the students. And the different departments and colleges have presenters that are going to share what it would like to be a business student. What would it be like if you wanted to be an animal science major and talk about those sorts of courses. And so the students will divide up according to their interest areas.

And one of the things I want to say to students especially is we recognize that when you applied to WSU that you told us you wanted to major in X. But that was six months ago. And now, you might want to major in something else. We're prepared for that.

In fact, we're prepared for you to come into Alive on day one and say, this is what I'd like to major in. And by day three when you meet one-on-one with an academic advisor, you've chosen something else. So we have a staff of academic advisors around campus that are there to work with you based on what your interests are.

They're going to talk to you about transfer credit you may have coming in. They're going to help you pick courses so that you would be taking courses if you were in business, for example, that the business students typically take in their first year. We're also going to share with students

the tools that we use, and students can look at some of those ahead of time by looking at the WSU course catalog or schedule of classes.

But our students, will during Alive, will be guided through that process, do some sampling first with some peer leaders, orientation counselors, have meetings with faculty and advisors, and then finally, on the third day, sit one-on-one with a faculty advisor and move through the selection of their courses. When they finish with that, they can actually enroll. And they will be officially WSU students at that point.

PHIL WEILER: So, Terese, you said something as a parent of three college graduates that I think was important for me when I was getting ready to send my kids to school. And that was that question about, do they know what they want their major to be? I think, parents, listen to what Terese said. It's still very early in their academic career. Don't worry if your young person has changed their mind or they're not quite sure. That is, in part, what college is about is to figure out where their interests lie. And so anyway, I think that was good advice. Thank you.

Bryan, I'm going to ask this question of you. And maybe this is a question of Dave as well. This was something that came in earlier and has to do with the quality of instruction that you would receive online versus face-to-face. I know you've got strong opinions about that. And I'd love to have you share your thoughts, and then, Dave, if you want to add something as well.

BRYAN SLINKER: Sure. Thanks, Phil. And I'll definitely let Dave do the heavy lifting on this question. But what I've observed of our faculty in the pivot, as they've called it over spring break in that two-week period to shift to online, did it go absolutely flawlessly? No. But it went fantastically well because of the long history we've had at WSU and the commitment of our faculty to engage by the hundreds in doing this well.

And what we saw in the aggregate, and again, this is not going to reflect absolutely every student experience, but in the aggregate, students stayed engaged. They completed on time. We had no more academic difficulties than usual. We had no more withdrawals than usual.

And so if you were to just put a set of data down in front of me with statistics about student performance and engagement, I couldn't have told you that we had shifted to online quickly in the middle of a semester, except for we allowed more flexibility for pass grades. And so there was more utilization of pass grades by some students. And they got to make that choice after they saw what their letter grade would be. So we changed the rules there.

And there were more use of incomplete grades because there were some students, whether it was a technology glitch or other adaptation problems, couldn't quite finish on time. So there was a little bit more use of incomplete grades. Students finished up after the end of the semester.

But from an aggregate statistics standpoint, it went fantastically well. And from reports from students and faculty, it went really well. And I'm really, I mean, just am heartened by the faculty

effort in doing this and the student effort in doing this because this was not easy for students, by any means, to do this. Everybody adapted well, and it was all built on the backbone that we had for the technology that underlies our global campus and the expertise we have in academic outreach and innovation.

And I'll also while I'm talking before turning it over to Dave, Dave and his team have made a commitment to keep that level of engagement up but also add to their capacity over the summer getting ready for fall, knowing that faculty are going to need help still in the fall. And so they're going to add 20 technology assistants to increase our workforce that help faculty do this in a quality way. And Dave mentioned already that we have more than 400 faculty already engaged in a variety of ways to improve what they're going to do over the fall. I guess what I'd ask you to do, Dave, is talk more about the general quality of the online education experience from your long history and engaging here.

DAVE CILLAY: Certainly. So at the cornerstone of the global campus is that we use WSU faculty. Many universities hire faculty outside of the ranks that exist on a physical campus. And so it's the same faculty who would teach a course in Pullman or Vancouver are the same faculty who are going to teach a course in global.

I think that's really important because they are the university. And those folks are going to be able to transition as we look at fall and these different modes of delivery, not just teaching global courses, but also teaching the on ground courses, leveraging some of the online tools. It's also the same curriculum. The curriculum that you'd see in Pullman is the same curriculum that you see in global. So it's just an extension of Washington State University.

I think in terms of the global campus, we have made a commitment to our students that we were going to provide a full campus experience because there's so much more to a higher education than just going to class. And that's very important. Don't get me wrong. That's a very, very important part of higher education.

But there's relationship building. And there's exploring different ideas and topics with people that may not have the same idea or topic that you do. And so we've worked to build a number of programs into our global campus that are relatively unique.

So we are one of the only, and I would say only, but I'm not sure, as of today, university in the country that has its own online student government. So we have students from our global campus who never set foot on a physical campus actually serve as representatives for the rest of the online students. We have a program called global connections. What we have there are individuals who are experts in particular areas that students want to understand from homebrewing to beekeeping, dream analysis.

And students who are interested in those topics-- it's not a course. It's not for credit. It's just common interests-- get together with an expert and get a presentation. And then they interact. And oftentimes, they build relationships, friendships around that topic that when they come

into that online class, they're connected. They know one another because they share that interest.

We also have a program called virtual mentors. And what we do is we hire past graduates who've been successful, and we ask them to mentor new students who are coming into this online space, so they understand how to navigate that online environment, the tools, how do we engage with faculty. So those are some of the things that we have done as a university to make sure that we're offering a complete education to all of our students, whether they're on a physical campus or online.

PHIL WEILER: Thanks, Dave. From my perspective, I was, I guess, surprised to learn prior to COVID-19 that the majority of our faculty were already teaching courses online before we made this switch. And if I remember correctly, I believe that virtually all of our students when they were graduating had taken at least one online course, just because it's a convenient way for them to be able to pick up credits when they need them, to be able to study during the summertime if they don't want to take a full load, for example. So the concept of distance learning, it was not foreign to WSU prior to COVID-19. And as I said earlier, I think it really, because of that experience, we are positioned well to make that switch.

Jill, I want to ask a question of you from a student affairs' perspective, a number of questions that we've received about health care for students. As a parent sending a young person away to school, health care is a concern. And certainly, now with COVID-19, it's an even bigger concern. So can you talk a little bit about Cougar Health Services? What is it? How do students qualify for it? What kinds of services are available to them?

JILL CREIGHTON: Cougar Health Services is our holistic health clinic on campus. And they serve a lot of functions from a medical perspective, much like your family medicine practitioner might do at home. So we have full time staff physicians. We have mental health providers. We have amazing nurses and physician's assistants that are all here to help our students maintain their health and safety on campus. This is also the space where you're going to turn in your immunization records, if you haven't done so yet. Cougar Health Services is the place you're going to want to do that.

Cougar Health Services is not an emergency service. And so we do work with our county and local hospitals for students who need emergency medical services. Students have the same access to our local hospital as any citizen of Pullman. And we also have partnered with Whitman County public health to help us understand a lot of what we can deal with in the fall for our in-person modality.

So students who are enrolled are eligible to use Cougar Health Services for their basic medical needs. And Cougar Health Services will also let you know if you might want to see a specialist that we don't have on campus. I also think it's important to note the reality that we're in a more rural environment than many of our students come from. And we have Spokane about 85 miles away, which has a much more robust health care system than we have in Whitman County. So

one of the things that folks want to just keep in mind as you look at if you have a special medical need, you might want to look into your specialists ahead of time and figure out how your student can receive the care that they need.

PHIL WEILER: Great. Thanks, Jill. Terese, I'm going to direct the next question to you. There are some questions that I see in the live chat about fees for Alive. Can you talk about what those fees are and just give us a little bit of background information?

TERESE KING: Sure. So for the Alive program, the students pay a student matriculation fee. That fee is \$250. And they can pay for that when they register for the program, or they can also pay for that after or as they're coming out to the program. Some students can have it billed to their student account as well.

It's a one-time fee that covers the services and programming involved with orientation. And it also includes the advising and registration pieces. It includes week of welcome activities, which is the week before classes begin for students, and also what we call extended orientation. So we want to make sure that that transition starts for the student and continues into the first few weeks of their semester and beyond, so that they have a really good experience.

The fee itself covers, and this is the same for the parent program too, it covers our professional staff and our student staff. I mentioned that it takes a village to put the orientation program together, and 400 to 450 university staff and students involved. We pay our student staff over the summer to be orientation counselors and help us deliver this program. So it's covering the salaries of our professional staff in the summer that work in the Alive program as well as the student staff.

It also helps cover our marketing materials. And we've invested in new technology to deliver the program virtually rather than in-person for the June and July sessions. And so it's also covering those costs.

For parents, very similar. We have a lot of virtual sessions, pre-recorded workshops that we've been doing over the past several weeks. And it will include the publication materials and staffing. We're also planning to mail parents something. And it's going to be a secret until you get it, so I don't want to say what it is.

But we intend to give, we call it, swag. You're part of the Cougar family. And we want to make sure that you wear it loud and proud. And so you'll get something mailed to you. And, students, you'll get yours when you arrive on campus during one of our week of welcome events. So really, the fees are there to cover all aspects of the program and marketing of the program and delivery.

PHIL WEILER: Thank you. So, Terese, is the Alive session, is it a live session, or is it pre-recorded? What can I expect if I'm a student and I'm going to be attending this?

TERESE KING: Yeah, so it's both. We have some pre-recorded information and materials that we'll send out about a week. Well, actually, we send out some information a week ahead of time that includes some preliminary steps we would like students to take, their placement testing, for example. If they have not already received college credit for math or writing or foreign languages, students can take their placement exams ahead of time. So that when the orientation dates arrive, they'll be ready for them.

And then on the actual days for an incoming freshman session, it's a three-day program. On the first day, the students will meet their orientation counselors. And that will be an exchange over Zoom for the orientation counselors and the staff. So they'll have some of this pre-recorded materials that they'll watch on that day. And then they'll interact with each other and interact with the orientation counselor student staff and faculty.

On the second day of the program, the students will be learning about our general education. That will be a live stream. So they've watched something pre-recorded, gotten a little bit of information. And then they will have someone actually from our office talk to them about why they're taking those courses, or they'll have a presentation from the honors faculty. Or they might have a transfer presentation if they're a transfer student.

So we're giving them a little bit of materials, like reading your book ahead of time a little bit. So that when you get into class, you're ready to go. And you've got questions. And you're interacting face-to-face over Zoom with the presenter of that session.

And we really pepper that pattern throughout the day where there is some things live and some things you'll go to and watch. Some things, again, we want to get the students up and moving around and interacting in different groups. And the workshops in the afternoon are live as well. And there's plenty of time for questions and answers.

We have resource fairs that really can introduce parents and students to a variety of the resources, residence life and housing, how to get involved as the student, how to get a campus job if you're-- and there are campus jobs, even though they're, in some cases, will have some virtual things for you. But we do have our staff that are really relying on students to apply for those campus jobs in the fall. And as I mentioned, on the third day of the program for the students, they're going to be doing one-on-one advising over Zoom with a faculty or professional advisor.

Those are set appointments for them. And they can take some time to talk about classes, talk about what their interests are, and pick those classes for fall. And then they'll meet again with their orientation counselors to register for those classes. I also know on the third day of the program that I'm involved in a parent panel along with some of my colleagues to talk more about any follow up questions that they have on advising or the programming that their student received and just to tie up any loose ends we have at that point. So it really is a combination.

PHIL WEILER: So, Terese, I've got another quick Alive question. I was just looking at the live chat on YouTube. And I think people are excited about Alive. But a couple of people are wondering, is it too late for them to sign up for the June 9th Alive session, so Saturday's alive. Is that one full?

TERESE KING: The June 9th one, the out-of-state program that we have for Hawaii, if they would like to contact the Alive office, they can do that, alive@wsu.edu, and ask about that session. Our first session next week, the Pullman one, if the students would like to contact the office, they can still sign up for the Pullman session. It's not necessarily late to sign up for the Hawaii session, the one that's delivered in Hawaii. But the other-- I'm sorry. The first session is full. I'm just getting in news. And so we want to make sure that-- sorry about that.

One of my moderators is like, it's full. It's full. So but we do want students to contact because we do have people switch around sessions too. And something comes up. So the best way is to contact Alive directly, the Alive office. And alive@wsu.edu is the best contact information.

PHIL WEILER: All right, breaking news, you're getting it live as you're speaking that things are full. Bryan, I'm going to ask you this next question because, as you noted, you are a scientist. There are some questions in the live chat today about, how do we do labs? So face-to-face courses, traditional classroom, I think we can understand how we might be able to do a hybrid model there. But what are the thoughts about whether it's a musical performance or you're a fine arts student and you need time in a studio or you're a science student who needs to be able to do lab time? How are we going to work through that?

BRYAN SLINKER: So the same basic criteria as for lecture. We know the spaces that we have available for us for those activities and their equipment. We're going to have to social distance. So there may be fewer students in those spaces at any one time.

We need to look hard at, can we mix for some labs in biology or chemistry? Can we do a few face-to-face labs, maybe fewer than usual, and supplement with some simulations or other very effective means to teach concepts online? Certain things are really unique. Glass blowing studio, you can't do that unless you're in the studio.

Again, we can't tell you exactly how we're going to be able to do that. We do know we can do it safely. What we don't know is how many students at any one time. So we may have to, for some experiences, we may have to be more creative in our use of the calendar, extend our hours later in the day, or maybe use some Saturday time to provide access for these because the one constant we know for most of these activities is we can't have the rooms as full as we ordinarily would have and stay safe.

So we're going to be creatively mixing up some alternative experiences, some hands-on experiences, maybe using extended hours to provide access. And for music lessons, things like that, there's certain things that really work better one-on-one, face-to-face, but we've also had experience and others have even in the private sector that at least some of them can be done

more virtually and still be effective. So as you see, labs, studio kind of activity, that's where you're going to see us being much more flexible and hybrid to take advantage of those unique capacities or capabilities with reduced capacity that has students in the room at the same time.

PHIL WEILER: Thank you. Jill, this is a question for you. I think it's kind of a student affairs type question. Couple families have been asking about safety and security for their students. So can you talk a little bit about the WSU police department and what we do around public safety for our students?

JILL CREIGHTON: One of the things that our students tell us pretty consistently is that they feel very safe on our campus. We do have that quintessential college town feel. Most of our campus or, actually, all of our campus is accessible on foot. And even our downtown area is only about a five to 10 minute walk away.

So I'm really always happy to see that WSU makes a lot of those top 10 safest campuses lists quite frequently. And most of our students who are just general night owls still say they can walk between their friends' residence halls and feel safe on campus. We also have a series of emergency lights on our campus in case something does arise. They are big towers with blue lights, and they can push those buttons if anything arises in that direction.

Our WSU police department is always happy to connect directly with students and families who have questions. And you can find them on the WSU website. Our chief of police Bill Gardner works very hard to connect individually with many students. And so if anyone would like to talk with him specifically, he has always offered up his ear for folks to listen.

PHIL WEILER: Thanks, Jill. Bryan, couple questions that we received and is, again, in this vein of health and safety and referencing specifically COVID-19. Parents are wondering, are students going to be required to wear masks in the classroom while they're on campus? And can you tell us a little bit about what the governor's requirements are for employees who are on campus with regard to facial coverings?

BRYAN SLINKER: So facial coverings, whether disposable or reusable cloth, are going to be required in workplaces in the state of Washington starting on Monday. The governor announced that about a week ago. That's employees.

Students who are in certain situations will need to wear facial coverings as well. We are still working out the details of what that looks like. But it's looking to me like we can't be as safe as we want to be, and particularly under guidance where in a typical workplace, the employees would be wearing facial coverings. Students are going to be wearing facial coverings much of the time if they're in spaces where they are still socially distanced but sharing the same air space, one way to look at.

Certain areas perhaps not. It's hard to eat with a facial covering on, just like in a restaurant. It's hard to exercise with a facial covering on. So as we look at some of the unique spaces like

dining or the rec center, there may be requirements in certain places to wear a facial covering and then, at other times, not.

So employees definitely. Students very likely in most situations if they're not by themselves in their dorm room or if they're not by themselves in the study area would be expected to wear facial coverings. But the details of that are still very much under discussion of what that would look like for students because, obviously, they're not employees. But they're sharing our same environment where employees are being asked to wear facial coverings.

PHIL WEILER: Thanks, Bryan. We're getting close to the top of the hour. And I think it might be worthwhile to recap what I think are some of the highlights we've talked about today. Jill, I'm going to address this to you because lots of questions both live tonight as well as that were submitted earlier around housing. Can you just remind us where do we stand with what housing is going to look like in the residence halls in the fall?

JILL CREIGHTON: So I know that everyone is so anxious to get this answer. And believe me, I'm anxious to give it to you. We're finalizing the work with our local and state health officials to make sure that we are good to go.

We're looking at a variety of scenarios. I know that across the country, some of you might be looking at where you have other students going to school, and you're seeing announcements come out. Every institution works with a different state and local health government. And so we're working to do what we can to make sure that we're making the right announcement to you once.

What that means for us is that we are examining what it means to have different types of density in the residence halls. When we are at normal full running capacity, we have even up to triple rooms. And so we're looking at whether or not we can run at full capacity. And that's a looming question. And we want to make sure that we give you the right answer one time.

Once we have that answer around our density question, then we can answer questions around the first year live-in requirement. We can answer questions around, who will my roommate be? And so just give us a couple more weeks. We have committed to providing this information in the month of June, and that was something we said to the WSU active current community in town hall probably three or four days ago I think.

So if you have individual questions, we are always here for you. Housing@wsu.edu is the email address. Our phone number is also on our website. I don't know that off the top of my head. But please just continue to hold tight with us for a couple more weeks. And we're going to get back to you as soon as we can.

PHIL WEILER: Great. Thank you. Bryan, I want to give you the last word. Any parting comments before we close?

BRYAN SLINKER: Well, first, so excited to have your students considering coming to WSU. I've been here on faculty since 1992. I'm a double alum. I love being a Coug. And I'm so excited to have your students join us as Cougs.

I want you to know that everything we do is hinged on providing the quality experience that we can within the safety we need and commit to each other in our community, this campus community and more broadly. So we want to be safe, have campus life, high quality education through a variety of mixed modalities. And we want your students to come be Cougs and succeed. And we'll get that done. So thank you for tuning in. And go Cougs.

PHIL WEILER: Great. Thank you, Bryan. I want to thank our panelists. Terese, Dave, Jill, and Bryan, thank you for spending your time with us. But more importantly, I want to thank you parents for taking the time to, first of all, submit your questions, being supportive of your young people as they're getting ready for this really important chapter in their lives. It's an exciting time but also kind of a scary time. Again, speaking as a parent, it's a mixture of pride and sadness knowing that folks are going to be leaving the house and moving on with their life. So thank you for joining us.

I want to remind you that this is the second of three that we have planned. The third parent information forum is scheduled for June 25th from 5 to 6 PM. You can see it information on there on the screen now.

The other thing I'll say too is that these sessions are recorded. So if you weren't able to join us right away and you want to be able to see the replay, you can go to experience.wsu.edu and get that information. Or if you missed the first one, for example, you could also go back to that as well. So we really, again, want to make these as informative sessions as possible. Our goal is to provide the best and safest experience for your students and for all Cougs. And so do please use these as a resource.

One last thing I'll say before we go, I also want to announce that we'll be holding a #WSUTogether welcome event for all confirmed students. It's going to take place on June 11th. And it'll be from 3:30 to 4 PM. There will be a link in your inbox here shortly once we finish our session tonight with more information. So please take a moment, look for that invitation to the WSU Together welcome event. We're looking forward to being able to welcome your young people here to WSU. So with that, again, thank you for joining us. Enjoy your evening. And go Cougs.