



FIVE TOWNS COLLEGE

December 28, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

I hope this email finds you well and enjoying the Winter Intersession with friends, family and loved ones.

When the Fall 2021 semester concluded, with your help the College was able to complete the entire term with a COVID-19 positivity rate that was nearly eight points lower than the average daily rate for all of Suffolk County. This comparison demonstrates that vaccination and mask mandates do make a difference. Even with the slight spike in cases on campus at the very end of the term, the relative mild nature in how the virus presented itself further supports that conclusion.

Indeed, since pandemic began on March 13, 2020 the Five Towns College community has responded well and achieved exemplary outcomes. This was made possible only through the flexibility and mutual concern each member of our community displayed for one and other.

As the current news reports document, the pandemic is not over. In response to the current surge, the College will implement the following measures to help assure that the Spring 2022 semester can proceed as planned. These are as follows:

- Delayed Start of Classes – The College will delay the start of the Spring 2022 semester. The first day of classes will now be on Monday, January 31. The semester will conclude on Thursday, May 27, 2022 with the Annual Commencement Exercises. The College Provost will circulate a revised Spring 2022 Semester Calendar shortly.
- Mandatory Booster Shots – With the CDC now recommending booster shots, they will be mandatory for our community in keeping with the College’s Mandatory Vaccination Policy. This is consistent with policies being adopted by colleges and universities across New York State, and is especially important since most members of our community completed their two-shot vaccination regimen more than six months ago. Please submit proof that you have received your booster shot to healthrecords@ftc.edu prior to the start of classes.
 - Religious Exemptions - Please note that the College will not consider new applications for religious exemptions from any current student or member of the faculty or staff. If you already have a religious exemption you do not need to apply for one again. If you do not already have a religious exemption, the College will not consider a request for a religious exemption solely for the booster shot.
 - Medical Exemptions – The College will consider requests for Medical Exemptions only when made by a primary care physician with specificity towards the booster shot. Generic medical letters by non-primary care medical providers that speak to the general nature of

vaccinations will not be considered – particularly for any individual with a history of vaccination.

Obviously, the change in the Spring 2022 academic calendar will lead to other adjustments in activity, performance, and event schedules. These changes will be communicated to you by your Division Chairs if appropriate. New move-in dates for resident students and game schedules for student-athletes will be shared by Residence Life Office and Sound Athletics Department once they are finalized.

Finally, Professional Development Day for Faculty will be rescheduled to a date later in the spring. The College Provost will circulate the new dates after the resumption of classes.

All other aspects of the Spring 2022 semester remain the same. With hospitalization rates for vaccinated individuals continuing to remain low and the virus presenting itself in a relatively mild form for vaccinated individuals, there are no current plans to pivot back to online instruction.

Of course, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask via reply email.

The College continues to keep your health and safety paramount, as our plans for the new semester are adjusted. It is our goal to assure that you may proceed with your education and to graduation with minimal disruption. Your continued flexibility is appreciated.

The Board of Trustees joins with me in extending best wishes for the New Year, and for the continued good health of the entire Five Towns College community.

Sincerely,

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