

As President Brian Mueller highlighted in his Chapel address on Monday, we have much to be thankful for as we wrap up the second week of the fall semester here at Grand Canyon University.

In-person classes, athletic events, full student activities and a Welcome Week in which the GCU campus community fully embraced one another have made this a truly special start to the 2021-22 academic year.

Doing this amidst the COVID-19 pandemic presents its share of challenges and we will continue to rely on the diligence of students, faculty and staff as well as our compassion toward one another to see us through.

The number of active coronavirus cases connected to the GCU campus is updated every week on the [COVID information web page](#) under the Health FAQs. At the start of this week, there were 90 active COVID cases among students – or about 0.004 of the student body. All have been placed in isolation while being cared for and none are experiencing serious complications or hospitalizations. There were an additional 6 active cases among faculty/staff.

The number of positive cases is significantly less than we are seeing at many universities but we are also cognizant that many of those universities started their semester earlier, so we will continue to monitor that data while also working closely with our local government and health authorities.

We expect COVID to be present on campus, just as it is in any community setting in Arizona, and we are working to manage those cases through isolation/quarantine protocols and contact tracing efforts to prevent further exposures. Although not mandated, we also continue to encourage students, faculty and staff to become vaccinated or, for those who are unvaccinated, to wear a face covering in settings in which physical distancing is not possible. The vast majority of positive COVID cases related to the more contagious Delta variant have been among unvaccinated individuals.

To schedule an appointment to receive the free FDA-approved Pfizer vaccine, simply contact the GCU Health and Wellness Clinic at 844-391-1949 or healthcenter@gcu.edu. Students who are vaccinated also are not required to quarantine if they come in close contact with an individual who has tested positive.

Some of you have already asked about receiving an additional third dose of the Pfizer vaccine. We will learn more about the possible rollout of those protocols once the FDA considers that authorization next week. Until then, the additional dose will continue to be available only to certain immunocompromised individuals.

As a reminder, face coverings are required in clinical settings on campus such as the Health and Wellness Clinic as well as certain laboratory environments and academic advisement areas such as the Academic and Career Excellence (ACE) Center, Math/Writing Centers or faculty office hours where close contact is more prevalent.

Please continue to follow healthy habits: wash and sanitize your hands often, participate in testing and contact tracing as necessary, perform daily wellness checks and stay home if you feel ill. If you do feel ill, call the GCU COVID-19 hotline at 602-639-7300 option #3. The Health and Wellness Clinic will guide you through next steps.

Thank you for your continued diligence as part of the GCU community!