



Office of the President

NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

August 21, 2020

Dear Lumberjacks,

The fall semester is in full swing, and I am grateful to our faculty and staff for their commitment to a successful phased-in approach to moving back to campus. The spirit of cooperation that we are seeing from our students in adhering to our health protocols is truly gratifying, as is the welcome our faculty and staff have extended to them. Courses are now well underway, with a combination of remote learning via NAUFlex and limited in-person instruction. I want to thank our faculty for their engagement, dedication, and commitment to student success and our students for bringing their aspirations to NAU and adapting in order to learn, excel, and stay connected.

As the fall semester continues to unfold, we must be vigilant and mindful of the many prevention efforts that are critical for the semester progress successfully. The key to this is our ability to maintain our testing protocols for students, faculty, and staff. Our surge testing at the Fieldhouse has gone exceptionally well, and it will continue to be available at no cost and accessible to all through August 30. To date, more than 1,700 faculty, staff, students, and members of the Flagstaff community have been tested using the self-administered nasal swab tests provided on site. The turnaround times for these tests are quick, and site visits usually take less than 10 minutes. I encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity for free testing and share this information with your colleagues, friends, and family. To register for a test, please follow the link to the [testing site](#).

Following our initial surge testing, we will implement ongoing randomized and asymptomatic testing for our entire campus community, which will help us monitor and manage health on campus throughout the fall semester. This phase of testing, which will use a saliva test, will be carried out through our partnership with Arizona State University and the Arizona Department of Health Services. A random sample of approximately 1,000 students, faculty, and staff will be invited for testing each week. Additional tests will be available for members of both the NAU and Flagstaff communities who wish to be tested. In addition to this testing, which will remain in the Fieldhouse, symptomatic and close-contact testing will continue to be provided by Campus Health Services throughout the fall. This integrated, multi-pronged approach to testing will allow us to monitor and screen the health of our campus community. More information about this next phase of testing will be forthcoming next week.

The Office of the Dean of Students has been aggressively enforcing mask and physical distancing requirements through the Student Code of Conduct. We take seriously our responsibility to monitor student activity that could pose a threat to the health of our broader community and expect all of our students to be accountable for their actions. There was an incident at a local establishment last week that resulted in NAU working with Coconino County and the State of Arizona to submit a formal complaint, with an investigation ensuing from our notification. We all must do our part to help ensure a successful semester, and I encourage everyone in the NAU and Flagstaff communities to inform us when they have concerns by using the Dean of Students' [incident reporting form](#).

I also want to thank our students for their commitment to the Lumberjack Way Forward. Your actions have a tremendous impact on the health of our community, and I am pleased to see our students across campus modeling healthy and safe behaviors as they begin their coursework.

Meanwhile, we are a week into the launch of a critical health self-assessment tool, called **NAU Healthcheck**, which is one of the many screening tools we have adopted, allowing individuals to assess their risk level each day. Students, faculty, and staff must take the NAU Healthcheck assessment daily—it only takes a minute—in order to screen for symptoms before engaging with others. I encourage you to bookmark the site or add the page to your cell phone screen and set a reminder to complete it daily. This protocol is vitally important to furthering our efforts to mitigate risks on a daily basis.

In addition to self-monitoring, NAU will be implementing the COVIDWatch app, which allows individuals to anonymously report a positive test result and anyone with the app installed will be notified of potential close contact. COVIDWatch will be available for iOS and Android users campus-wide prior to the broad resumption of in-person learning on August 31. Combined with our testing protocols, the use of technology like Healthcheck and COVIDWatch will provide layers of prevention, screening, and notification to help keep our community safe and limit the spread of COVID-19.

Supporting the health of the campus community is a responsibility we all share and will require a commitment from all of us as we embrace changes to the way we live, learn, and work.

My thanks once again for your contributions to helping our students make a successful return to campus. Keeping the campus open and our semester moving forward as intended will require all of our best efforts. I know that working together as we have will give us the best possible opportunity to have an exceptional year in the midst of this extraordinarily challenging time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rita", written in a cursive style.

Rita Hartung Cheng
President