

Student/Family Information Session

January 12, 2022

Q and A

Question 1: What does StFX plan to do for their unvaccinated students if they plan to implement a vaccination mandate in the fall of 2022. Will the unvaccinated be denied the right to an education or to finish their education?

Answer: 98% of our population is vaccinated. Unvaccinated individuals were asked to test twice/week. We made a decision to not continue the mandatory testing based on the number of tests available. We are considering a mandatory vaccination. Right now all the efforts are focused on the semester ahead. We will communicate once a decision is made.

Question 2: Have arrangements been made with Maritime Bus to increase the number of trips from Halifax to Antigonish? The schedule appears sparse and long waits for students arriving early on January 29th.

Answer: Maritime bus have added new times to their schedule on Friday @ 11:40, 3:45 4:50 and 7:45, Saturday @ 3:45 and 4:50. They will continue to monitor the flight and are flexible to change the times on request.

Question 3: In the past professors have been given the flexibility of offering classes online many chose to do so even when the campus was open, given the stated higher value of in person classes relative to online will this option be removed going forward? For example if campus is open will all classes be in person?

Answer: Since we have reopened, there hasn't been a general option for faculty to teach online. 2019/20 A number of faculty were required to go online because of physical distancing requirements. We were only able to offer 75% of our classes in person. Since the beginning of this academic year we moved back to our normal environment which is the vast majority at the undergraduate level being in a face-to-face environment. We expect a very small number of courses being offered in an online capacity in the winter turn. The vast majority of our courses will be face to face as of January 31, 2022.

Question 4: Please explain how my daughter will not have a discount for her meal plan?

Answer: We looked at two different options for rebates. These are all subject to approval by the BOG. On the residence side it is going to be a proration based on days so it is 16 days less in residence based on a normal schedule. 7.5% reduction in residence fees. The meal plans are different. Meal plans don't expire at the end of a given day/week. It is a set block of meals throughout the academic year. The most popular plan is the 315plan that works out to approx. 7 meals every 10 days. For the days that are remaining in the term when the students return there is ample time for the students to use the meal allocations they have therefore we aren't providing a discount on meal plans.

Question 5: Are students able to return earlier than on the 28 to the 30th?

Answer: If students are experiencing difficulty with online learning they will have the option to request an early return based on an assessment done by the university.

Question 6: Regarding the prorated reduction in residence fees can you confirm if the deadline for final payment will be extended beyond January 15? If so, when will the final amount be known and or due?

Answer: We aren't planning on changing the final payment deadline of January 15, 2022. There are two options: 1. Pay the full amount and we will refund you the reduction or if you want you can calculate the refund based on 216 less 7.5%. For most students, depending on the room they are in, that will work out to be between \$450 and \$650. If you want to leave that amount outstanding on the student account, there wouldn't be an interest charge on that amount.

Question 7: What are you doing for shared bathrooms as you cannot wear a mask in the shower?

Answer: Public Health has provided some very solid risk management criteria. One of them is if you have a barrier between you and another person the barrier will provide protection.

Question 8: For return to campus, what time is the Keating Centre opened until? Will there be someone there to explain the protocol after hours.

Answer: The Keating Centre will be open until 9:00pm after this please contact Security @ 9028674444 and arrangements can be made to accommodate the student.

Question 9: When will class changes be advised to students if they are to be in other locations then what is currently on their schedule?

Answer: The changes in the classrooms haven't yet been finalized. We expect this to be finalized next week so please continue to check. We will provide notice to students and faculty of any changes up to a week in advance of the January 31st classes.

Question 10: Given the disruption in plans that may have been experienced can the finalization of the April exam schedule be done earlier so that families can make adjustments?

Answer: The reason that we have an exam schedule that doesn't come out until a few weeks into a term is we need to allow students to finalize their class and course selection for the term because we use an automated software system that allows us to create an exam schedule that minimizes the number of conflicts for students so they don't have for example 3 exams in one day. It allows for a schedule that fits both the instructors and the students. We have a date of February 11th that the exam schedule is to be finalized. We will get that out earlier than February 11th if possible. We have to wait until students move around their course selection, they have until January 24th to do this. Once this is complete we will begin working on the exam schedule.

Question 11: Considering the additional stressors of Covid will there be any forgiveness for students who incurred academic penalties or suspensions in the fall term?

Answer: There aren't any academic penalties or suspensions at the end of an academic term. We only look at these in May after the full academic year is complete. At that time we will take into

consideration the disruption caused by Covid 19. We will be mindful that we need to be flexible with the imposition of those regulations, we have done this in the past and we will do it again.

Question 12: Can Nova Scotia Health offer the booster to students, especially because the booster for this age group is still not offered in many cities.

Answer: The best advise is, if the booster is available in your area please make an appointment to receive it. To date he booster isn't yet available in NS for the current student age group.

Question 13: What is the plan if there is another outbreak?

Answer: We have had experience and we know the importance of communication in terms of people monitoring symptoms and reporting to isolate@stfx.ca and following all the Public Health protocols. We know we have the skills, ability and protocols in place to monitor the isolation of a significant number of students on and off campus. It is an ongoing discussion, and we are confident in our ability to support people on and off campus. We know we have the experiences to do it. What we don't know is the level of transmission of the virus within the community. Every decision that is made will be communicated through Public Health. We will take their stance as a way to move forward.

Question 14: What are the return dates for students returning to residence? And will parents be allowed to help students move back in on January 28th?

Answer: The housing office communicated via email to all students in residence with their date of return to residence. Similar to last year we will have a no guest policy in residence to reduce unnecessary contacts. We will have trolleys and people to assist with moving in.

Question 15: When will students that have to book flights know when they can move back into the dorms so they can book their flights accordingly?

Answer: This information would have been communicated via email from the Housing office. Please contact the residence office at residence@stfx.ca for further information.

Question 16: Will study spaces such as the library be opened on January 31st?

Answer: Yes

Question 17: Regarding the early morning arrivals on January 29, 2022, is it possible to request that Maritime Bus have a late departure on that day as well?

Answer: This request will be made. Please continue to check the schedule for updates.

Question: 18 Are students on PST time zone expected to attend all their online classes? An 8:15AST would be a 4:15PST class time.

Answer: I would encourage any student who is in this situation to reach out to your professor and tell them your situation. We have the capacity to record and upload lectures to moodle and we will do this when necessary. We do have some students who are returning to campus early for this reason. Please contact your professor with your special request.

Question 19: My child is vaccinated and put in a room with an unvaccinated student making a very stressful term. Would the university consider having the unvaccinated student pay for a private room and not be placed with vaccinated students?

Answer: Please contact student life at studentlife@stfx.ca.

Question 20: What is the availability of student jobs this semester?

Answer: Yes, there will be a variety of student jobs available throughout the university.

Question 21: Will there be an option for professors to live stream their classes for any students who might be isolating?

Answer: There will be the possibility that some classes will be recorded or offered in a hybrid format. We aren't requiring faculty members to use the double modality approach. If a student is required to isolate and misses the class time we will do everything we can to accommodate but it won't always be the case that it is possible to have an online class.

Question: 22 Will the pool be reopening?

Answer: Yes, the pool will be reopening later this month.

Question 23: If we have already paid our fees in full for the year, how can we get reimbursed for prorated residence refund?

Answer: Cheques will be issued from the student accounts office once all the final calculations are made. This will be done sometime in early February.

Question 24: Who should someone contact to make special arrangements to arrive after 7:00pm on one of the scheduled arrival days?

Answer: Please contact student housing at housing@stfx.ca

Question 25: Before the break there was a bathroom designated for isolating students. Will this still be an option when the students return in January?

Answer: All bathrooms will be back to normal, no separate bathrooms for isolating students.

Question 26: Is there still a February break?

Answer: Senate approved a February break and at this point it remains in place, obviously that will be dependent on how we move forward.

Question 27: Are you able to repeat the protocol for unvaccinated students? Is there something different for an unvaccinated student?

Answer: There is no protocol in place for unvaccinated students this term.

Question 28: Will the February break be reduced to avoid students going away?

Answer: It is under discussion but no decisions have been made to date.

Question 29: Are there different return dates for different residences?

Answer: Please check your email from the housing office.

Question 30: Will the booster shot be mandatory to remain on campus without weekly testing?

Answer: Full vaccination is still identified as two doses of the vaccine. The booster will not be required to stay on campus.

Question 31: Why are students receiving a refund for residence this year but students weren't given that option last year?

Answer: There was a refund two years ago when the university closed early. We only opened slightly later last year and there wasn't a winter break so the total number of days in residence was the same.

Question 32: Are you opened to putting all classes online like other institutions for non-vaccinated persons?

Answer: We are not able to put all classes online. We are going back to our traditional/normal approach which is face to face classes.

Question 33: Regarding gathering limits, three students are permitted in a dorm room much smaller physical place than lounges where 6 students are permitted. Proportionally student lounges would seem larger to be double the size of a dorm room and that is the capacity of at least 10 students to be able to gather in a lounge.

Answer: Where we have landed with this to help students to avoid violating the provincial regulations. When we allow the number allowed by public health there is a risk of going over that number. The fines can become excessive very quickly. These numbers are to help students stay within the regulated numbers.

Question 34: Will the StFX gym be open?

Answer: Yes

Question 35: Will all future xring ceremonies be held virtually until the pandemic has ended?

Answer: Right now it is very difficult to answer this. We are moving a week if not a day at a time right now. We have learned a lot. We will have to make that decision closer to the event based on where we are in the pandemic.

Question 36: When will other food cafes be open on campus apart from Morrison Hall and Starbucks?

Answer: January 31st is when they will open. That is subject to the volume of students in different areas.

Question 37: How will out of province students access health care service? For example the online visits require a NS Health card.

Answer: We offer campus health services that includes a Dr. and doesn't require a NS Health card so this should not be an issue. I would encourage you to contact the Health and Counselling Centre if you have any questions.

Question 38: I understand that the grab and go food quality at the end of last term wasn't the best. Will improvements be made on quality and variety?

Answer: My understanding is that improvements have been made based on experience over the past two weeks. We are cognizant of make sure there are options for students and that the quality is kept at a good standard.

Question 39: Regarding the response that students are to calculate the residence refund, for submission of fees by January 15th could a formula be posted?

Answer: The formula is 7.5% of the residence fee.

Question 40: Many students wear their mask below their nose in class and in study spaces. How will masking policies be enforced? And what consequences will there be?

We are all in this together and wearing your mask in the proper fitted form is important for all of us. Please remind your friends and people around you to wear your mask properly. We will be providing a detailed mask policy but as a reminder it is for your protection and the protection of the community. It is one of the single most important things that we can do to keep everyone safe. We will be taking the mask policy very serious.

- 1st violation would be a formal written warning, there would be a meeting and there would be a review of the outline.
- 2nd violation would be a fine of \$100.
- 3rd violation could be a residence suspension. We will follow our contract process.

Question 41: If a student has a positive PCR test within 72 hours of entering across the border will he/she be able to participate in classes in some way?

Answer: If a student isn't available to be on campus for in person classes they are to contact the AVP Office @

**Below are unanswered questions from Student/Family Information Session Wednesday,
January 12, 2022**

Anonymous Attendee 06:40 PM

Will the booster shot be mandatory to remain on campus without weekly testing?

No

Anonymous Attendee 06:51 PM

If a student has a positive covid test (PCR within 72 hours) preventing entry across the border, will he be able to participate in classes in some way until able to cross?

Please contact your dean or professor regarding your situation.

Jeff White 06:52 PM

Are there any triggers or thresholds which would prevent return to in person classes on January 31?

We follow the advice of Nova Scotia Public Health and proceed according to their recommendations.

Meghan Saunders 06:52 PM

Is the school planning on going online for the second semester if the virus gets bad on campus? For example how bad does the outbreak need to be before school goes online? Or is the school planning on staying in person.

We follow the advice of Nova Scotia Public Health and proceed according to their recommendations.

Alexandre Guerra 06:52 PM

I was originally going to attend the university during the fall term, but I ended up having to defer my acceptance to January, all my fees have been updated to reflect this change, except for my health plan and dental plan. my question is, what should I do now? should I just pay what is shown on my balance and ask for a refund of half of that value later?

Contact the Student Benefits Office as soon as possible to address this matter.
stfxplan@mystudentplan.ca or 902-867-2495. Your specific situation will help indicate if any credit or adjust is required.

Gill Morrison 06:53 PM

Just to confirm the final move out date has changed by 8 days to? Asking for summer employment opportunities applying for.

Thanks for your time and continued efforts to keep everyone safe.

The last day of exams is Thursday, April 28th. Residences will close at noon on Friday, April 29th.

Anonymous Attendee 06:55 PM

Will the graduation be in person, and will parents be able to attend?

It is too early for that decision to be made. Currently, Nova Scotia's group limits only for 10 people.

Anonymous Attendee 06:56 PM

I'm wondering about the protocol going into the winter semester for students who are off campus and travel(commute) daily from outside of Antigonish from another community to attend classes. Are there additional requirements?

There are no additional requirements other than the procedures put in place such as check-in, obtain your green bracelet to wear for two weeks, and wear a mask.

Anonymous Attendee 06:56 PM

Is it acceptable to return the day after the residence designated return date.

Yes, students can return the day after their designated return date, but we would request an email from each student indicating their arrival date change. should you provide the email address they would send this to?

Anonymous Attendee 06:57 PM

Approximately how much revenue did StFX bring in due to the X ring ceremony?

The event is not for profit. Only revenue would be if someone bought an item at the StFX Store.

Will Grab n Go provide a greater variety of gluten-free options?

It is now a bigger operation than the regular grab and go that was offered.

Anonymous Attendee 06:59 PM

Can the university provide access to purchase N95 masks for students?

At this time, students are required to take their own masks.

Anonymous Attendee 07:00 PM

It was our understanding that all exams would be completed by this Friday, January 17th. My daughter has an exam upon her arrival back to school, either the 31st or 1st. She is travelling a long distance and will be adjusting to the time change, being back in person and working through new course material. Can you comment on how this decision was made?

Your daughter should contact her dean or professor regarding the exam and travel implications.

Tonyah Gift 07:01 PM

Will moves be made to put all classes online for unvaccinated students next fall if you implement the mandatory vaccination status.

The University would not have the ability to deliver all classes in person as well as online.

Anonymous Attendee 07:01 PM

My child was in need of a throat swab last term but was told by student health he could only be seen about 1 week later by a doctor for that swab as the Nurse said she would see him virtually and that she was not able to do the swab - he was told to go to the emerg (no walk in clinics in Antigonish). Can conversations be had to improve the access to the student health services for students who would otherwise be waiting hours in emerg for a straight forward assessment such as a throat swab?

The Health and Counselling Centre always follows Public Health protocols and requirements. Because these protocols are constantly evolving, the way we offer services to students must also evolve and adapt to the circumstances at any particular time. Throughout COVID, the Health and Counselling Centre has offered a combination of in-person and virtual health care services to students, which has allowed us to provide continuous care, albeit not always in person as many would prefer. Because of high COVID-related demands on the health care system, NS Health has currently suspended the processing of routine lab tests (including testing for common student concerns such as sore throats, STIs and UTIs). This means we are required to follow a new care path for the time being, which is different than what students have experienced in the past. We continue to place student health and wellbeing as our highest priority, and our services reflect this commitment, while also acknowledging the constraints created by the pandemic.

Stacie Bowdridge 07:01 PM

Are we going to be able to review the QA from this meeting?

Yes

Anonymous Attendee 07:47 PM

Will the athletic events be happening in February onwards?

StFX Athletics will follow public health guidelines, along with AUS and U SPORTS protocol pertaining to returning to sport and competitive games and will resume play as soon as the governing bodies deem it is safe to do so.

Anonymous Attendee 07:59 PM

What is happening with the athletic events this semester?

StFX Athletics will follow public health guidelines, along with AUS and U SPORTS protocol pertaining to returning to sport and competitive games and will resume play as soon as the governing bodies deem it is safe to do so.