



MARIST

FALL 2020

**REOPENING
STRATEGY**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As we welcome the Class of 2024 and return to campus amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Marist finds itself in unprecedented times. Since our transition to online learning and remote work in March, College leadership has been working diligently with faculty, staff, students, and alumni to develop comprehensive plans which not only prioritize the safety of our community members but also preserve key elements of what makes the Marist experience special. While daily life will undoubtedly be different, we are confident that this will be a challenging but successful semester.

Marist is welcoming students back to campus this Fall for both an academic and residential experience. As part of our preparation, the College has convened three committees representing academics, student affairs, and campus operations. All work undertaken by these committees has been informed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), New York State (NYS) and local government, as well as advice from our own medical and health experts.

The following principles have guided our efforts:

- **We will fulfill our mission and meet the Marist College standard of excellence.**
- **The health and safety of the Marist College community is paramount.**
- **We will respond with innovation and flexibility in the face of complexity.**

Detailed in this report are critical elements of Marist's comprehensive reopening plan. This information will continue to evolve, so we ask that you follow our communications detailed on our dedicated website and remain flexible to changes as needed. We look forward to sharing the full details of the reopening as they are finalized.



ACADEMICS

The committee has developed a comprehensive plan to continue to deliver Marist's high-quality academic offerings in a manner that places community safety at the forefront. After careful consideration for student health and the safety of the Marist community, a modified Fall 2020 schedule has been established. In-person courses will run from Monday, August 24 to Tuesday, November 24. Classes will continue November 30–December 4 online, with final exams taking place online December 7–11. There is a clear health rationale for these changes. Many epidemiologists are predicting a surge in COVID-19 cases in early December, which also coincides with the annual flu season. By ending the on-campus portion of the fall semester at Thanksgiving, we will eliminate the health risks of students traveling all across the country and then returning to campus. We will also be holding some classes on Saturdays and canceling the fall break in October, which discourages travel, again minimizing the risk of exposure to the virus.

Additional measures to protect the Marist community are listed below, and further details will be forthcoming.



Modifications to Course Instruction

- **Blended instructional model:** The College will utilize a blended, flexible model of in-person and online instruction to provide flexibility for students to fulfill their academic requirements.
- **Technology-based collaboration:** The College is providing a robust suite of technology tools for students to engage in collaborative activities, both on-site and remotely. Technology resources will supplement the in-person classroom environment and create additional ways to interact with peers in a project space scenario.
- **Learning management enhancements:** Leveraging feedback from students and faculty, the College has expanded the functionality of its learning management system (iLearn) to offer additional pedagogical resources and improve the end-user experience. Students can expect a more uniform course design and additional functionality.
- **Office hours:** Marist is strongly encouraging online office hours for faculty and academic advisors.

ACADEMICS



Procedures for Instructional Space

- **Social distancing:** The safe use of learning space requires attention to social distancing standards, use of technology, and other health and safety policies and protocols, including wearing face coverings. Classrooms have been modified to allow for social distancing between students, and will operate at a reduced capacity (50% or less).
- **Adapting public spaces:** Academic buildings will feature modified wayfinding including one-way corridors and staircases, restricted use of elevators, and floor markings to ensure appropriate social distancing. Use of communal space in academic buildings will be restricted.
- **Enhanced cleaning:** In alignment with CDC public health recommendations, academic spaces will be cleaned between class sessions with hospital-grade cleaning products and electrostatic sprayers. Restroom and high-touch surfaces will be cleaned regularly.



Academic Support Services

- **Academic support:** All academic support offices, such as the Library, the Center for Career Services, the Writing Center, etc., will remain open and available to students during the fall semester. Social distancing measures will be in effect for in-person visits. Students will be encouraged to continue with remote services whenever possible.
- **Internships:** Internships will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by internship coordinators, and only those that meet safety precautions for preventing the spread of COVID-19 will be approved. Virtual internships are recommended.



Suspension of Study Abroad

Marist has made the difficult decision to suspend all study abroad programs for Fall 2020 due to the ongoing travel, health and safety concerns associated with COVID-19. The Florence bachelor's degree programs will continue.

OPERATIONS

HEALTH & SAFETY

The health and safety of the Marist community is our top priority. In order to make returning to campus possible, the College has developed a series of protocols and safety measures as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), New York State (NYS) and local government, as well as advice from our own medical and health experts. As a condition for returning to the Marist campus, community members are required to follow the COVID-19 related policies and requirements that have been established. The College continues to monitor the evolving understanding of COVID-19 and will adapt its policies and procedures as new information becomes available.

While we are introducing multiple health and safety measures, it is critical that all members of the Marist community take responsibility for their individual behavior. Even with the best of planning, the College cannot eliminate the health and safety risks posed by COVID-19. We can, however, work together to reduce those risks. All members will be required to acknowledge that responsibility and will be held to its standard.



Before Returning to Campus

- **COVID-19 testing:** Students will be required to show proof a molecular PCR COVID-19 test two weeks prior to their arrival on campus. Anyone who tests positive will be required to isolate, notify Marist Health Services, and receive certification from a health care provider before they can return to campus.
- **Self-quarantine:** To maximize campus safety, the College strongly recommends that all students self-quarantine for two weeks before their arrival on campus. All travelers from domestic and international high-risk areas will be required to quarantine, according to NYS guidelines, which continue to evolve.
- **Online training:** In accordance with NYS requirements, all students, faculty, and staff are required to complete a comprehensive online safety training program.

OPERATIONS

HEALTH & SAFETY



Social Contract

All students, faculty, and staff will be required to adopt a culture of shared responsibility for the safety and well-being of the Marist community. This will require behavioral changes to minimize risk, and a shared commitment to following all guidelines for the duration of the COVID-19 public health emergency. Students, faculty, and staff will be required to attest in writing to follow all CDC, New York State, and local guidelines, as well as Marist policies. Violation of these guidelines will result in disciplinary action.



Protecting Our Campus Community

- **Restricted community access:** Marist is committed to doing everything we can to keep our community safe and healthy. By reducing interactions outside of the Marist community, we reduce the likelihood of the spread of the virus. We think of campus as an island, and as we welcome students back for the fall semester, we will be asking them to preserve the community as an island to minimize exposure and the spread of COVID-19. Students will be discouraged from going in to the community.
- **External programming:** To limit exposure to our community, all external events are prohibited during the fall semester.

OPERATIONS

HEALTH & SAFETY



Travel

- **College travel:** Official College travel is prohibited, unless authorized by a Vice President.
- **Residential students:** Residential students are discouraged from leaving campus.
- **Student personal travel:** Student travel during the fall semester is discouraged.
- **Employee personal travel:** Faculty and staff travel is discouraged.



Visitors

- **External visitors:** All outside events are canceled and external visitors are prohibited from attending campus events.
- **Parents of current students:** Parents of students will be welcomed to visit, but will not be permitted to enter residential or academic buildings.
- **Admission visitors:** Visitors to campus for admissions purposes will be accommodated in accordance with NYS requirements and CDC guidelines. Visit marist.edu/visit for more information.

OPERATIONS

HEALTH & SAFETY



Required Public Health Measures

- **Face coverings:** Face coverings/masks are required for all students, faculty, and staff in all academic buildings (including classrooms), common areas, and public spaces.
- **Personal hygiene:** Marist requires all individuals to follow CDC recommendations for handwashing, coughing/sneezing, and general hygiene.
- **Flu vaccine requirement:** Flu vaccines will be required for all members of the Marist community. Exceptions will be made based on medical conditions and religious beliefs in compliance with legal requirements and standards of medical care.



Enacting Social Distancing Protocols

- **Campus space modifications:** All campus locations, including classrooms, residence halls, dining hall, and offices have been modified to reduce density in accordance with NYS requirements.
- **Limit large gatherings:** Campus gatherings and non-essential gatherings have been limited in size in accordance with NYS requirements. Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to use WebEx or other online platforms to facilitate group interactions.
- **Density reduction:** To comply with social distancing guidelines, all shared common spaces on campus will have reduced density. Gatherings in lounges and other informal spaces will be limited, and students must maintain social distancing at all times and wear a face covering over the nose, mouth, and chin. Marist strongly encourages the use of outdoor locations on campus.

OPERATIONS

HEALTH & SAFETY



Accommodations for At-Risk Community Members

Marist is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students, faculty, and staff who may be at-risk for contracting COVID-19. Where feasible, this may include remote instruction and/or work, or modifications to campus workspace.



Monitoring, Testing, Contact Tracing

- **Health screenings:** To ensure the ongoing health and safety of the community, students, faculty, and staff will be required to participate in a robust, regular health screening program, in accordance with NYS guidelines.
- **Testing:** To minimize the potential spread of COVID-19 on campus, all symptomatic students and their close contacts will be tested.
- **Contact tracing:** Marist will train an internal contact tracing team for COVID-19 to work closely with the Dutchess County Department of Health to allow for the most rapid, comprehensive approach possible to limit outbreaks.



Isolation and Quarantine Measures

- **Isolation and quarantine:** In accordance with NYS guidelines, Marist will require isolation and quarantine for any individual who tests positive for COVID-19, or has been exposed to someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19.
- **Protocols for positive testing:** Students, faculty, or staff who test positive for COVID-19 will be asked to isolate at home.
- **Limited campus accommodations:** Under limited circumstances, the College will provide accommodations for students who are unable to return home due to travel restrictions or other health restrictions.

OPERATIONS

CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT

As the College moves forward with its reopening plan, the Operations Committee has implemented protocols to ensure that all physical spaces meet or exceed CDC and NYS Department of Health standards. Remote work will be continued in operational areas where it is appropriate.



Changes to Campus Spaces

- **Density reduction:** To plan for the fall semester, Marist engineers worked with Robert A.M. Stern, Liscum McCormick and VanVoorhis, and Ann Beha Architects to develop comprehensive density reduction plans for academic buildings on campus, including the McCann Center and Murray Student Center to ensure compliance with NYS requirements.
- **Administrative offices:** As a measure of additional safety, administrative offices will be relocated or modified to ensure appropriate physical spacing between individuals and where feasible, plexiglass barriers have been installed to minimize contact between individuals.
- **Office relocation:** Administrative offices located in academic buildings will be relocated or modified to reduce the number of people in campus buildings during class times.
- **Public health signage:** Branded signage and messaging will be installed in all campus buildings, including academic buildings and residence halls, to continually reinforce community expectations. Signs will also indicate designated entrances and exits, one-way directions for stairways and hallways, and provide floor marks to show people where to stand and sit, and elevator capacities.
- **HVAC system enhancement:** In accordance with industry best practices, MERV 13 filters have been added to our HVAC systems, and air handling units have been adjusted to increase the amount of fresh air introduced into campus buildings.

OPERATIONS

CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT



Enhanced Cleaning

- **Hospital-grade sanitation:** In conjunction with social distancing and personal hygiene guidelines to minimize the spread and health risks of COVID-19, the College will employ a consistent, thorough, and deliberate cleaning strategy across all campus facilities. This strategy includes use of hospital-grade EPA approved products for disinfecting and deep cleaning of communal areas including bathrooms, lounges, kitchens, elevators, laundry areas, and hallways. Residence hall bathrooms and lounges will be disinfected at least three (3) times per day based on the resident's schedules and preferences.
- **Access to cleaning supplies:** As part of this strategy, it is expected that students, faculty, and staff take responsibility for cleaning and sanitizing their own living and work spaces. Housekeeping services will focus on high-touch surfaces, such as public restrooms, handrails, tables, faucets, and doorknobs, among others.
- **Increase in hand sanitizer:** To support increased hand washing, Marist has increased the number of hand sanitizer dispensers throughout the campus in order to ensure placement at the entrance to every building.

STUDENT AFFAIRS

Campus life is central to the residential experience at Marist. While life on campus will undoubtedly be different this fall, we are working with local and statewide health officials to ensure that our campus policies continue to prioritize the safety and health of our academic community.



Safety Procedures for Residential Housing

- **Residential move-in:** Housing and Residential Life has carefully organized an extended, de-densified move-in process to follow public health safety guidelines. Specific details to follow.
- **Residence hall occupancy:** In order to provide an on-campus living experience that promotes public health and safety, Marist housing will restrict the number of students living on campus to standard occupancy. In most cases this means no more than two people per room.
- **Residence hall access:** Building access for residential halls will be restricted to students who live in each residence hall.



Adapted Dining Experience

- **Safe dining policies:** Marist, and its dining partner, Sodexo, are committed to ensuring students have safe access to a wide variety of dining options. A number of safety measures will be implemented for the fall semester.
- **New dining options:** In lieu of self-service dining, Marist will introduce a “grab and go” option in the main dining hall, and Grubhub ordering for retail operations.
- **Additional seating:** To supplement reduced seating in the main dining hall, the College has identified additional dining locations to allow for social distancing and will prioritize outdoor dining areas as feasible.

STUDENT AFFAIRS



Additions to Student Support Services

- **Teletherapy access:** Students' mental health and physical well-being are essential to their academic success as well as their personal, social and emotional growth. To ensure access to and ongoing continuity of care in the current unprecedented circumstances, Counseling Services will deliver all services via teletherapy during the Fall 2020 semester.
- **Accommodation services:** The Office of Accommodations and Accessibility (OAA) will continue to provide a wide array of services in a remote format during Fall 2020 semester. OAA staff will work closely with students and faculty to ensure appropriate accommodations are in place for the blended, flexible model of learning and will continue to serve students on an individual basis by appointment.
- **Additional Health Services options:** The Office of Health Services will expand use of telemedicine and operate with modified protocols for in-person appointment, where necessary.



Modifications to Student Programming

- **Safe practices:** All student activities will be reformatted to comply with NYS guidelines and maximize safe practices, utilizing outdoor venues and virtual options.
- **Outdoor programming:** Outdoor spaces will be utilized to allow for co-curricular programming and small gatherings per NYS requirements.
- **Campus only events:** Attendance at campus events will be limited to include only the campus community.



Athletics

Marist continues to work with the NCAA, MAAC, and Pioneer League to determine whether fall events will take place as scheduled.

COMMITTEES

President Murray designated the formation of committees to oversee the reopening of the College focusing on Academics, Campus Operations, and Student Affairs.

In addition to the work of the committees independently and collectively, the College planning discussions have included extensive input from the Student Government Association, the Faculty Affairs Committee, the Deans' Council, and the Marist College Board of Trustees. In addition, dozens of individual members of the community—students, faculty, staff, alumni—have provided important suggestions and critical insight into this process. Marist College is deeply appreciative of the wide range of discussion resulting in our planning.

Academic Planning Committee

Charge: Prepare the College's academic schools for a return to in-person operations for the fall semester, and propose plans for necessary adjustments to instruction, research, and student support based on stakeholder outreach to faculty and students. Additionally, the committee has prepared for contingencies should it not be safe to return, in part or in full, to on-campus operations in the fall.

Members

Thom Wermuth, *Chair, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty*

Nancy Calabrese, *Head of Public and Research Services*

Toni Constantino, *Manager of Online Programs*

Kate Donham, *Associate Dean for Academic Affairs*

Deborah Gatins, *Dean, School of Social and Behavioral Sciences*

Kevin Gaugler, *Associate Professor*

Eitel Lauria, *Professor*

Jim Melitski, *Professor*

Roger Norton, *Dean, School of Computer Science and Mathematics*

Mike Powers, *Associate Professor*

Carol Rinke, *Associate Professor*

Andy Ryder, *Senior Lecturer*

Julin Sharp, *Assistant Vice President, Information Technology*

Tenzin Tsundu, *Student*

Joey Wall, *Director, Media and Instructional Technology*

Melinda Weisberg, *Assistant Professor*

COMMITTEES

Operations Committee

Charge: Prepare campus operations for a return to in-person instruction and residential academic experience for the fall semester, focusing specifically on health and well-being, support services, campus events and activities, and campus spaces.

Members

Geoff Brackett, *Chair, Executive Vice President*

Sima Saran Ahuja, *College Counsel*

John Blaisdell, *Director of Safety and Security*

Justin Butwell, *Director, Physical Plant*

Mike Caputo, *Vice President for Information Technology/Chief Information Officer*

Alexa D'Agostino, *Associate Vice President of College Marketing and Communications*

Christina Daniele, *Vice President for Human Resources*

Steve Katz, *Medical Director, Physician Assistant Program*

Erin McLaughlin, *Clinical Assistant Professor*

Alicia Slater, *Dean, School of Science*

COMMITTEES

Student Affairs Committee

Charge: Prepare Student Affairs operations for a safe, high-quality environment for residential and commuter student life at Marist.

Members

Deb DiCaprio, *Chair, Vice President and Dean for Student Affairs*

Al Abdelrahman, *Associate Director of Safety and Security*

Sima Saran Ahuja, *College Counsel*

Geoff Brackett, *Executive Vice President*

Toya Cooper, *Director of Equity, Inclusion and Compliance/Title IX Coordinator*

Sarah English, *Director of Housing and Residential Life*

Naomi Ferleger, *Director of Counseling Services*

Maryellen Guardino, *Associate Director, Office of Accommodations and Accessibility*

Tim Murray, *Director of Athletics*

Steve Sansola, *Associate Dean, Operations and Facilities*

Melissa Schiskie, *Director of Health Services*

Robin Torres, *Assistant Dean, Student Engagement and Leadership*

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