

Dear SHSST Campus Community,

Since COVID-19 became a reality for all of us in March 2020, I have closely monitored, along with the help of others, local and regional trends and forecasts regarding COVID infection rates. As you all know, at the start of this year there was a tremendous spike in cases, particularly of the Omicron variant, which required our reversion to Phase 4 of SHSST's COVID-19 Response Levels Operations Plan for the start of the spring semester. I have been grateful for everyone's understanding and support in working together to protect the physical health of each other and our community.

However at this time it seems as though infection rates are trending downwards, and while this is not a foolproof method of predicting the possibility of sudden surges in the number of positive cases, it does lead myself and those with whom I've consulted, to feel confident in re-evaluating our current level of precaution.

As such, beginning tomorrow, Wednesday, February 16, we will move to Phase 4.5 of SHSST's COVID-19 Response Levels Operations Plan. Please see the guidelines of Phase 4.5 below:

- **Courses:** Courses are delivered in-person, though designed to take advantage of online delivery in order to minimize on-campus class sessions and allow for seamless toggling between in-person or online delivery formats; pastoral placements are operational though possibly modified depending upon the situation; formation classes, formation advising, and spiritual formation are delivered in-person. F1 language courses will be 100% face-to-face.
- **Operations:** Full operations are maintained; on-campus offices are open; employees work on campus; exceptions must be approved by their manager and the President-Rector. The building will remain closed to the general public but arrangements can be approved by the President-Rector's Office on a case by case basis. Guests will be asked to wear a mask while in the building.
- **Practices:** Meeting size is not limited, though restrictions may be imposed if the situation warrants. Masks are optional for vaccinated employees and students on campus while the CDC recommends that unvaccinated persons continue to mask indoors. If an individual is uncomfortable meeting with others in a closed room setting, then out of respect the others in the meeting should accommodate that person if they so desire. In addition, please note that wearing a mask does not imply the individual is unvaccinated but feels safer or more comfortable with the mask on, due to a variety of reasons.
- **Campus Population:** All students are allowed on campus to engage fully with school functions and community life following continued guidance from the CDC and local health authorities.
- **Library:** Physical space is open to all students, faculty, staff, and outside patrons; interlibrary loan and SWITCH borrowing are available.
- **Bookstore:** The bookstore is open by appointment. Contact Jenny Drzewiecki at JDrzewiecki@shsst.edu.
- **Cafeteria:** Capacity in the dining room and chapel will no longer be limited but individuals may want to continue social distancing and mask wearing due to comfort or other reasons. Windows in the lobby, dining room, or offices (including doors) can be opened, weather permitting, to allow for good airflow and to mitigate viral transmission. Food service will continue plating food as is currently the practice through the end of the semester. Food service employees will decide on an individual basis if they will wear a mask.
- **Chapel:** All members of the school community are invited to liturgical services as appropriate and may wear masks if desired.

Thank you again for your continued cooperation and understanding that such decisions are not made lightly.

In the Heart of Christ,
Fr. Raúl

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YOUR SEMINARY