



Office of the President

January 3, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

Happy New Year! I hope you were able to get some much-needed rest over the holiday break. As we rang in 2022 over the weekend, each of us probably felt some concern about this latest surge in COVID-19 cases.

The troubling news is that positive cases are way up in Los Angeles County—December 31 data indicated 27,091 new positive cases and 1,628 current hospitalizations. But there is a positive side to this news. If we compare county data to one year ago, when we had 15,129 new cases and 7,546 hospitalizations, we can see that while the positive cases are higher, the number of hospitalizations is much lower in this latest surge. The severity of the disease—and the subsequent impact on our hospitals—appears to be lowered due to the characteristics of the omicron variant and the widespread availability of vaccinations.

Spring Semester Operations

As I have mentioned in the past, we know how to revert to online services if and when the public health situation deems it necessary. The highly contagious nature of the omicron variant and this subsequent surge necessitates a modification to our operations for the start of the spring semester.

While all offices will remain physically open as planned, the district has made the decision to move all courses with an on-ground lecture component to an online-only format for the first two weeks of classes, with a return-to-campus date of [January 24, 2022](#). Courses with a laboratory component (CTE, sciences, etc.) may opt to move forward with the lab portion on-campus as previously planned. For those faculty who prefer their lab classes meet in person (on campus) [beginning January 10](#), the district will continue to follow our well-established safety protocols and encourage weekly testing regardless of vaccination status. In addition, Student Services will be moving all in-person services with students into a virtual format. The COVID-19 website will be updated this week with information on how students can access these services.

It is important that we communicate our plans well so that employees, students, and the community alike have a clear understanding of each area's on-campus services. While we will be updating our COVID-19 web page and sending notifications through social media and email campaigns, I ask that you please help us get the word out by updating department web pages as needed and by communicating with students as appropriate.

I continue to be immensely grateful to our college community as we navigate today's environment. I know that our students appreciate your hard work and dedication. Please let me know if you have questions.

Jose

Jose L. Fierro, D.V.M., Ph.D.
President/Superintendent