

To: The UMHS Community
From: Warren Ross, President

Once again, I would like to welcome you to UMHS.

We have great news to share with all of you today. The government of St Kitts and Nevis's new COVID regulations have been in effect for over three weeks now, and the results have been very positive. The previous lockdown has been suspended, and businesses and schools have reopened. As a result, the University has been open since July 13th and has resumed an in-person program for students that are currently on Island. Last week the government modified the curfew hours, which are now from 11 PM to 5 AM. The country has done an amazing job in its fight against COVID, and we commend them for the actions they have taken to promote vaccinations and limit community spread. We are proud to announce that we have seen a significant decline in active COVID cases in St. Kitts. In the last three weeks, the number of active cases has been reduced from 153 active cases to approximately 40. The government continues to promote vaccines and has close to 70% of the population receiving one dose of the vaccine.

Encouraged by this great news, we are urging students to return to St. Kitts in the Fall. The current policies have been very effective and should minimize the possibility of a future lockdown, especially since vaccine and health care policies have had such a positive effect on St. Kitts.

For those returning in the Fall, the government has modified its travel policies reducing the 14-day quarantine policy to **four days** for those who are fully vaccinated. On the **4th day**, the student is required to be tested again. Please note that testing centers are closed on Sunday, so plan your trip accordingly. Also, note that test results on occasion can be delayed and are not released until later in the day. Payment for the test will be the responsibility of the student, which can only be paid by credit card. Listed below is the actual travel policy:

As part of the reopening, the government will require all non-citizens to provide:

- (1) Subject to the applicable Travel Protocols established pursuant to the COVID-19 (Prevention and Control) Act, all travelers shall be required to submit official proof of a negative RT-PCR test taken 72 hours prior to entry into Saint Christopher and Nevis
- (2) Subject to the applicable Travel Protocols established pursuant to the COVID-19 (Prevention and Control) Act, all **travelers shall be required to submit official proof of their vaccination** status against the COVID-19 virus prior to entry into Saint Christopher and Nevis.

3) Pursuant to sub-regulation (2), a non-resident traveler shall be required to produce proof of full vaccination upon arrival in order to enter Saint Christopher and Nevis

(4) All citizens and residents of Saint Christopher and Nevis shall be permitted entry irrespective of their vaccination status.

(5) Notwithstanding the provisions of the COVID-19 (Prevention and Control) Act, all arriving travelers who are fully vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus;

(a) shall remain in a government quarantine facility for a period of **four days** and be tested for the COVID-19 virus on the **4th day** or

(b) may remain in quarantine at a private residence certified by the National COVID-19 Taskforce, with the written permission of the CMO in consultation with the Commissioner of Police and shall pay for private security services for the duration of that quarantine period; and

(c) shall only be released from quarantine upon receiving a negative PCR test

UMHS Campus

Our goal is to have everyone on campus vaccinated, including students, faculty, and staff. With the rollout of the vaccine occurring in St. Kitts, the vast majority of the faculty have already been vaccinated.

We also recognize that it must be worthwhile for students to return, and with that in mind, it is our intention to have the full campus open with all facilities being made available. This includes the auditorium, classrooms, study areas, laboratories, library and learning center, faculty offices, cafeteria, gymnasium, and lounge.

The majority of professors will be on Island apart from those who cannot travel due to government restrictions. Consequently, for those on Island, the majority of all classes will be conducted in-person. We now have the technology to teach in-person and simultaneously broadcast online to students who opt to study remotely.

In summary, we plan to have the campus fully open for the September semester delivering on-campus learning as well as an online option for those wanting to remain remote. Students will be required to follow the COVID protocols, which we have put in place for your safety, as well as for the safety of the UMHS community. This includes wearing face masks on campus and social distance protocols where appropriate.

You will not be able to enter the country without being fully vaccinated. It is our understanding that in Canada, there is a 16-week period between vaccinations. If that

impacts your ability to get your second vaccine dose, you should remain online until you are fully vaccinated. At that point, you can choose either to return to St. Kitts or stay online. For those who have received the first dosage of Moderna or Pfizer, the option of being vaccinated in St. Kitts is not available.

Given the improved conditions, we strongly encourage you to return to the Island to pursue your studies. There are multiple advantages to this, including:

1. Having comfortable, safe, quiet places to study
2. Access to fast, reliable Internet
3. Access to facilities and learning support services
4. In-person access to faculty
5. Connection to the collegiality of the University and its community

This Fall, we will be making a substantial improvement to the infrastructure of UMHS. As a result, we will be completely replacing our existing network, fiber optics, and campus wiring to make our network ten times faster, more reliable, and secure. In addition, we are finalizing our plans for a pedestrian bridge, and we hope construction to begin this Fall.

At the time of writing, it seems very likely that quarantine arrangements will remain in place, at least for the beginning of the September semester. The St. Kitts government still requires fully vaccinated students to quarantine in government-approved facilities for **four days** upon arrival and be retested on the **4th day**. Government-approved facilities include the Royal St Kitts, Ocean Terrace Inn, Oceans Edge, and Koi, and we will make every effort to encourage them to reduce costs. You can obtain the latest information directly from the Housing Department and Ms. Caroline Liburd, who will have up-to-date information. We highly recommend you reserve space in one of these facilities, since other schools are competing for these spots. Ms. Liburd can be reached at cliburd@umhs-sk.net. Please note that you should check with the Financial Aid Department to see if this expense can be included in your budget.

We are informed that the number of flights to St Kitts remains limited; therefore, seat availability may be an issue. Students are encouraged to make a decision soon and book flights and accommodation as quickly as possible. Please notify Mrs. Nelida Alvarez, Post Acceptance Director, as soon as you decide whether or not you will remain online or come to St. Kitts. Mrs. Alvarez will guide you through the enrollment process, including information on visa documents, travel arrangements, housing options, and quarantine information.