

From: Warren Ross, President
David Graham, Provost
Don Roberts, Dean

To: All Basic Science Students

Re: September 2021 Semester

We are encouraged to see a steady increase in the number of vaccinated people across the country and around the globe. To date, more than 235 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered throughout the U.S., fully vaccinating over 95 million people - more than 28.5% of the U.S. population vaccinated. Over 42% of the population (140 million) have received at least one vaccine dosage. Our understanding is that virtually anyone 16 or older should qualify for the vaccine at this point. This is welcome news for all of us, our students, and their families, and we know it will create a safer campus.

In light of the increased access and the proven public health benefits, we have decided that we will require all new and returning students to be fully vaccinated this September. We understand that not everyone would like to receive a vaccine, and we will consider medical and religious exemptions. The high transmission risk associated with the new variants makes vaccinations prudent and in the best interest of our Campus and the country of St. Kitts.

There will be only a limited number of exemptions offered next semester. Those students that are exempt may be offered an option to remain online this Fall. Exemption requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis; they are NOT automatically granted. Students requesting an exemption for religious reasons will be required to submit a written statement, signed by the student, explaining how immunization conflicts with the student's religious beliefs. A religious exemption is not the same as a philosophical, moral, or conscientious exemption. Students requesting an exemption for medical reasons will be required to submit a statement from their doctor explaining the medical contraindication and the time period for which the exemption is being requested. All requests for exemptions must be submitted in writing to the Dean of Student Affairs, Dr. Mungli. He can be reached by email at pmungli@umhs-sk.net

Proof of vaccination is required to register. Students who have already been vaccinated should forward documentation of their completed vaccination to:

**ATTN: Admissions Office
University of Medicine and Health Science
275 7th Ave, 26th Floor
NY, NY 10001**

We also strongly urge all faculty and staff who can be vaccinated to do so immediately. At this point, virtually all the faculty and senior administration have been vaccinated. Mass vaccination is critical for us to return to a normal campus experience. Without adequate herd immunity, estimated at this point by medical experts, to be between 70 and 90% of the population, we cannot open fully in the Fall, and consequently, will have to continue mandating stricter health regulations on Campus to ensure the health and safety of the U.M.H.S. community.

We have really missed you on Campus; and are very much looking forward to having students back, with all the life, vitality, and excitement that they bring to our medical school.

Current situation in St Kitts and St Kitts' Government position

The Government of St Kitts has taken a cautious approach to the COVID 19 pandemic, which has been very effective. There are currently no active COVID cases on the Island.

The vaccination program in St Kitts is now underway. The current view from the authorities is that restrictions will remain in place until appropriate herd immunity of the population has been achieved. Only at that time will restrictions be lifted. The government recently released a statement that they intend to fully open the country in October with the expectation of getting over 70% of the Island vaccinated.

We expect that the current restrictions will remain in place, with a negative PCR COVID test 72 hours before arrival and another at the end of quarantine. Anyone arriving after May 1st that is fully vaccinated will only have to quarantine for nine days. Those that are not fully vaccinated may have to remain in quarantine for the full 14 days. Fully vaccinated means both the Pfizer or Moderna Vaccination dosages or one dosage of the Johnson and Johnson Vaccination. To qualify, the last dosage must be greater than two weeks from arriving in St. Kitts. Please note that in some of the quarantine locations, students will be able to vacation in place, giving you full access to the facilities. If the country achieves herd immunity before September, this policy may be changed.

The official line which still applies is that hand hygiene, masks, and social distancing will be required across the Island. However, we have recently heard that if there are sufficient numbers of people who are vaccinated within a particular organization, it could be considered a large "bubble," where the application of social distancing and masks may be relaxed somewhat. According to C.D.C., this is the new standard they have recommended, which the Government of St Kitts has embraced.

U.M.H.S. 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, most 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 vast majority of professors have now returned to the Island, and consequently, classes will be conducted in person. We now have the technology to teach to the class in person and simultaneously broadcast online to a small number of remote students.

In summary, we plan to have the Campus fully open for the September semester delivering on-campus learning, supplemented by the ongoing delivery of the online program, a so-called but limited hybrid approach. Students will be required to follow the COVID protocols we have created for your safety, as well as for the safety of the U.M.H.S. community. This includes wearing face masks on campus and social distance protocols where appropriate. Further details of the UMHS COVID protocols are attached to this message. For students who have been unable to be vaccinated but want to return to Campus, there may be a possibility of obtaining the vaccine in St Kitts, but this will depend upon availability and government approval. The vaccine is offered in St. Kitts is AstraZeneca. We will meet with the government to see if the vaccine can be available to students in the Fall. It is our understanding that in Canada, there is a 16-week period between vaccinations. Suppose that impacts your ability to be fully vaccinated. In that case, you should consider two options: remain online until you are fully vaccinated or return to St. Kitts for the second vaccination of AstraZeneca when it becomes available to students. For those who have received the first dosage of Moderna or Pfizer, the option of being vaccinated in St. Kitts is not available. Please check with Helen Gillanders (University Nurse) hgillanders@umhs-sk.net if you have questions about St. Kitts Vaccinations.

Given that the situation is beginning to improve, we are adopting a more positive approach, and we strongly encourage you to return to the Island to pursue your studies. There are multiple advantages to this, including comfortable, safe, quiet places to study, fast, reliable Internet, access to facilities and learning support services, including the library, and probably most importantly, in-person access to your teachers, your friends, and colleagues and the collegiality of our university.

Accommodation

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. We are in the process of negotiating with a number of quarantine facilities, including 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. She 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.

Travel

We are informed that the numbers of flights to St Kitts remain 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. We would also suggest that you consider coming to St Kitts, during the break, before the start of the semester. This should ease travel concerns and would allow you to get through quarantine in a timely fashion.

Visa Requirements

Students must be aware of and in possession of the required visa to enter St Kitts to study. Further details and advice concerning this are attached to this message. Please see the document prepared by Dr. Frank Wagner entitled Visa Requirements.

Campus Transport

Transportation will be made available and will be appropriate for the number of students on the Island for the September semester. Students relying upon transportation will be required to wear masks and may also be required to have temperature checks before entering the vehicle. Once again, we are excited to resume in-person classes and look forward to a great Fall Semester.

Visa Requirements: Additional Information from Dr. Frank Wagner

The requirements for incoming students to get their first student visas are listed in the Welcome Packet, and those remain the same. There have been no changes in these requirements.

If a student is returning to Campus and already has a student visa, it may still be valid. They are generally good for 20-24 months. If the visa is still in effect, there is nothing more for the student to do before arrival. If the visa expires AFTER they are back on St. Kitts, they should see Ms. Farrell two weeks before expiration.

If the student's visa expires before they return to St. Kitts, they must have it renewed. The following are the requirements for renewing a student visa:

1. Renewal application. This is available by email from Ms. Farrell (jfarrell@umhs-sk.net)
2. A copy of the original U.M.H.S. acceptance letter
3. A police report from the jurisdiction where they have been living for the past six months
4. A notarized copy of the bank statement showing a balance of at least \$10,000 or a copy of the final loan award letter indicating a comparable amount. If the student has a financial sponsor instead of their own funds, a notarized copy of the sponsor's bank account may be substituted as long as it is accompanied by a notarized financial support affidavit, available in the Welcome Packet.
5. One professional passport photo
6. Copy of passport data page
7. Copy of round-trip airline ticket or itinerary
8. \$150.00 Visa renewal fee. Although this is a government fee, checks should be made out to U.M.H.S. Students may also pay the fee by credit card on the U.M.H.S. website.

If students or admissions personnel have any questions about visa applications or renewal, they are welcome to contact me, and I will be happy to answer them. fwagner@umhs-sk.net

Dr. Frank Wagner.
fwagner@umhs-sk.net

Campus COVID Protocol

1. If you are unwell or have a fever, you cannot come to Campus.
2. If you are unwell and not on Campus please contact the Campus Nurses Office at 466 2181 Ext 260 or WhatsApp 762-0999, or by email hgillanders@umhs-sk.net. You will be told what you need to do next, if anything.
3. You may be required to have your temperature monitored on entry to the Campus or a transport, depending on whether we are able to establish the bubble or not. Please do not come to Campus at any time if you're unwell.
4. Please wear a mask or face covering at all times while in a Public Space on Campus.
5. Until we have achieved a bubble where all students, faculty, and staff are fully vaccinated, masks will be required in all academic settings. The goal is to have everyone vaccinated.
6. Make sure your mask is clean and replace and sanitize often.
7. You will be asked to sanitize your hands before entering Campus.
8. You will be required to carry your own Hand Sanitizer to supplement the Hand Sanitizer stations available to you on Campus.
9. You will be required to maintain any social distancing protocols, depending on what is currently in place, while on Campus.
10. We have placed signs on Campus and information through the electronic information boards to remind you. Please take note of the floor markings and maintain a safe distance.
11. Eating inside in the Bookstore is not permitted at this time in order to promote social distancing.
12. You need to have an appointment to meet faculty in person. You must report to reception first.
13. Please follow the guidelines for exit and entry to Campus and do so within the time given in accordance with the St Kitts Government Mandatory Curfews. (These are subject to change)
14. Students should be prepared to bring a supply of masks to St. Kitts. P.P.E.'s will also be available in the University Bookstore.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact:

Neida Alvarez
Post Acceptance Director
646-248-1766
[Book an appointment](#)

Corie Helms
Associate Director of Admissions
248-487-1866
[Book an appointment](#)

Earl Mainer
Senior Associate Director of Admissions
678-680-5474
[Book an appointment](#)

Shyam Dharia
Executive Director of Enrollment Management
732-889-7353
[Book an appointment](#)

Marie McGillycuddy
Vice President of Admissions
646-241-5934
[Book an appointment](#)