Utah State Eastern Prepared for Fall with Course Options, Community Expectations

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Utah State University has announced plans for how students at each of its campuses will take classes this fall, what technology will be needed, and how the university will maximize safety in classrooms that host face-to-face instruction.

Students registered for courses at any campus this fall were emailed July 1 notifying them how to find information about this fall. Multiple course delivery methods will be utilized, including: traditional face-to-face; hybrid face-to-face; interactive broadcast; online only; web broadcast; and blended delivery. More information is available about these methods USU Ready, a website developed to help students and faculty find the resources needed for a successful fall semester.

“Utah State University Eastern has been working on a plan to ensure the best educational opportunities for our students while respecting the safety of students, faculty and staff,” said Greg Dart, associate vice president at Utah State Eastern. “We feel confident we have a plan that will allow for students to learn the way they learn best, and in a safe environment.”

This fall, all students will need access to a computer and high-speed internet. USU’s Service Desk team is available to help answer questions about technology usage and requirements. Additionally, USU is providing students with funds from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act for technology grants for fall 2020. Up to $2 million has been allocated, which will be dispersed in $300 grants. Full-time students who have not filled out the FAFSA or whose financial situation has changed since then, can still apply for a technology grant. Funds will be disbursed first-come, first-serve until fall or until the funds run out.

The university is calling on all students, staff and faculty to do their part to minimize risk to the rest of the community. On campuses that host in-person classes, face coverings will be required. Seating will be marked to ensure social distancing, and high-touch surfaces will be cleaned regularly to help minimize the risk of COVID-19. Attendance will also be taken to assist later in tracing contacts in case someone in the class is diagnosed with COVID-19.

“To protect each other, we’re asking students and faculty to wear face coverings in every classroom around campus and where social distancing is difficult,” said USU Vice Provost Janet Anderson. “We need to do it because we care about each other and to allow for continued face-to-face interaction this fall.”

The university has also adjusted the fall 2020 semester schedule on all campuses in order to decrease the risk of COVID-19 spreading. The day allotted for “fall break” (Oct. 16) was canceled, and instruction beginning the week of Thanksgiving break will be remote only. This will allow those students whose permanent home is away from USU campuses to stay there until the beginning of spring semester, reducing the opportunity for spread of the coronavirus in classrooms.

Students are encouraged to review their class schedules and instructional delivery methods at my.usu.edu and make any necessary adjustments. USU also has a live chat feature, as well as phone and email support, through the USU Registrar. Students should make sure to check their preferred email address for future details. More information about the university’s response to the current pandemic is at www.usu.edu/covid-19.

“We are making the necessary adjustments to keep our students, faculty and staff safe during this time of COVID-19. Amidst these adjustments, we remain committed to providing the assistance, support, and services our students need to be successful,” said Kevin Hurst, director of students at Utah State Eastern. “We admire the resiliency of our students, and it is our greatest desire to keep them safe as they pursue their educational goals.”

Fall semester begins Monday, Aug. 31. Because of Thanksgiving break (Nov. 25-27), instruction will go remote after Friday, Nov. 20. The last day of classes is Friday, Dec. 11. Finals will be held remotely during the week of December 14-18.