

Dear Students,

Please pay close attention to this important message.

The purpose of this communication is to provide you with important reminders and updates to our COVID-19 prevention plan. Current local, state, and national COVID-19 statistics are significantly worse with the rate of transmission being at a substantive level. The health of our campus community is important to us individually and collectively, to providing safe care to our patients, and for you and your peers to complete your education without disruption.

As we are reaching the two-year mark on the pandemic, pandemic fatigue is a real factor and threat; nevertheless, it is the utmost priority for us to be prudent in our prevention practices in obtaining our goals of providing you with a quality education with the optimal experiences we can provide. **We are asking all individuals to maintain strict compliance with COVID-19 prevention practices through the month of January.** We will reassess the rate of transmission and the threat of COVID-19 to our community weekly and communicate updates as needed.

What can you do to support the mitigation of COVID-19?

- Model and promote the implementation of these guidelines.
 - Obtain your COVID-19 vaccine booster per the [CDC guidelines](#). For more information about where to find a booster, please [click here](#) for information from the Virginia Department of Health. Ensure you keep your documentation on your booster vaccine. Boosters are not required at this time but may be required in the future.
 - Wear a procedure mask in public areas of the building.
 - Ensure the mask fits well covering your nose and mouth.
 - Keep your mask on even in informal student gatherings such as in the learning commons and study spaces.
 - Practice physical distancing of at least 6 feet from other people whenever possible.
 - Avoid gathering in groups unless it is for established classes and/or meetings.
 - Use video conferencing (i.e.: Zoom, Facetime, etc.) for student meetings, studying or project work.
 - Avoid eating in the student lounge and/or with students that you don't typically sit near in class or interact with in clinical/practicum. Instead, prepare your food, then return to your classroom and eat at your desk where you typically sit. This will assist with contact tracing and reduce the spread of disease.
 - Avoid gathering in groups with students outside of campus without practicing these mitigation strategies.
 - Follow room capacity guidelines.
 - Clean before and after you use an area with provided materials.
 - Monitor for symptoms and do not be around others if you are sick. Many of us are used to ignoring or pushing through signs of illness; however, we need to intentionally make different decisions in our current pandemic world. I would like to remind you that if you are experiencing any of the following symptoms, you should not come to campus, clinical/practicum setting or be near others even if vaccinated. If you are experiencing symptoms (fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose,



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nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea) you should report this to Robert Pelter or to our COVID tracking team. To report symptoms to the COVID-19 tracking team or ask questions/seek guidance, please use this email: response@bsmcon.edu.

- Ensure you are up to date on scientific data related to COVID-19, prevention strategies, vaccines and treatments. Students are to educate their patients and community about COVID-19 vaccines utilizing the guidelines of highly recognized organizations to include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- Be kind to patients and health care professionals. Listen to what people have to say; try to understand another's point of view and come from a place of love for humankind. Offer scientific education without judgement.
- Step outside the building during break times; use outdoor space when possible. Utilize the outdoor picnic table space when the weather allows.
- Keep updated by visiting the College [website](#). CDC guidelines on quarantine and isolation continue to evolve. We have not adapted changes to our practices at this time, but we will post any changes if they occur.

Our College campus remains open for student use with the strategies that we have in place. Thank you for doing your part! Our goal is to keep our campus open in this fashion as long as it is safe to do so; however, if the public health status changes and we need to convert to distance education to keep our community safe, our program is ready to seamlessly pivot.

For more information, please see the College [website](#).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jody D. Crane".

Jody D. Crane, M.A.Ed., R.T. (R), (BD)

Dean

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