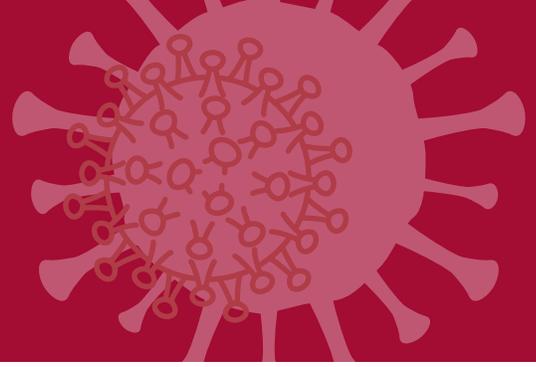


CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO FALL ONLINE ACADEMIC PLAN



Students, Faculty, and Staff -

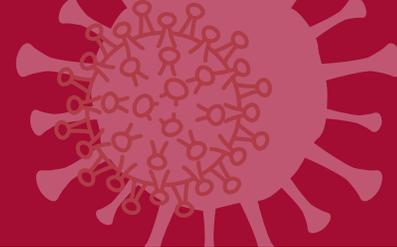
Several weeks ago, I shared with you Concordia University Chicago's *Return to Campus* plan, which spelled out our decision to reopen campus this fall with a mix of on-campus, hybrid, and online courses. In that moment, the document reflected the best possible plan for continuing to offer an exceptional education, both on campus and online. If we have learned nothing else in 2020, it's that conditions surrounding COVID-19 continue to evolve, and we must be flexible enough to change plans accordingly. Amid ongoing prayer and detailed research and planning, it is again necessary to adapt our plans to further protect the University and our people against the growing pandemic.

As a result, CUC announces today that all classes for the fall 2020 semester will be delivered in a 100% online format. Reducing the number of face-to-face interactions will provide a significantly better opportunity for the University to sustain a safe campus environment. Our first priority remains the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff. We also extend our care and concern for the welfare of the wider Concordia-Chicago community, which includes those who live with, or come into close contact with, our students.

Our most meaningful work here at CUC is to form students for lives of influence and service for the common good. This is the purpose that draws us together as a welcoming Christian community dedicated to teaching and learning. Therefore, we are excited to announce that campus housing will remain open and available this fall for all who wish to live and learn together with their peers. Those who are able to join us as residential students will continue to take part in vibrant student life and engaging experiences throughout the fall, even though we know campus life will look a bit different from normal, with safety precautions like social distancing and mask wearing.

The shift to online learning this past spring stretched all of our gifted faculty to expand their teaching skills. Over the course of this summer, most of our faculty members have participated in additional training to strengthen their online teaching. We will also implement the use of Zoom across the University, which should enhance our students' online learning experiences. I am confident our faculty are well prepared to provide an outstanding learning experience for our students this fall.

Classes will begin on Monday, August 24, as originally scheduled. On campus, you can expect offices to be open for business. Student services will provide regular support, both in-person and virtually. We are also looking forward to a non-traditional fall sports season, which will offer student-athletes exciting new opportunities. Our music ensembles will move forward with plans to practice for and deliver virtual concerts this semester. Residential students will still have the opportunity to participate in on-campus worship and events, and all students can connect with one another through the many virtual events we have planned. All of this, and much more, will be contained within forthcoming revisions to the comprehensive *Return to Campus* plan.



Our Admission and Student Life teams are working diligently to finalize updated plans for student check-in. Likewise, residence halls will open with revised options, with the goal of providing nearly every student who chooses to live on campus with a single room. Please see the housing FAQ below, and watch for separate communications about check-in processes in the coming days.

Each of you also plays an integral role in the success of our safe return to campus this fall. Keep an eye out for details about our new *Cougar Care Commitment*, through which we will all pledge to care for ourselves and one another. We will also be introducing a new smartphone app that will assist those on campus with conducting a daily personal health assessment, and will provide CUC with the data needed to conduct contact tracing on campus, should it become necessary.

We are grateful for your patience, as we work to respond appropriately to the challenges the COVID-19 pandemic continues to present. The current situation is unusually fluid and subject to change. In the midst of this unprecedented uncertainty, the University seeks to provide clear and consistent direction to members of its extended community. Our intention, beyond protecting the health and safety of our University community, is to avoid the disruption in learning that would occur if the pandemic forced us to close the campus. Given our long and rich history, we are committed as a Lutheran university to demonstrating integrity by aligning our practices with our beliefs. This includes making decisions that help us provide a rigorous, transformative education to all our students, while doing everything we can to protect the members of our extended University community.

Most importantly, we will still provide an education that keeps Jesus Christ at the center of all we do. Concordia-Chicago remains faithful to our Lutheran identity and our formation of students through the pursuit of truth. Our students will continue to discover how God is calling them each day to serve others and grow in faithfulness.

Of course, no plan is perfect amid a pandemic that is fraught with uncertainty. And yet together, as the Concordia family, we have continued to endure and adapt to constant change. I could not be more proud of the resilience exhibited by you—our students, faculty, and staff. Please continue to lift each other up and provide the support needed to move forward with the new academic year.

In a year unlike any other, God's wisdom and grace continue to guide our steps as we journey together. I invite you to join us as we open the academic year in praise and celebration of His glory during our virtual [Opening Service](#) on Sunday, August 23.

Dr. Russell Dawn, President



Frequently Asked Questions

How will remote classes this fall be different from those in the spring?

The unexpected closure of campus this spring caused a challenging pivot, as we moved from face-to-face classes to remote learning. Over the past several months, faculty have been working diligently to prepare their courses in multiple formats. This preparation has made it possible for the University to provide excellent instruction, regardless of modality. In addition, the University's IT team has improved the technology infrastructure to better support professors and students alike, which includes adding full availability to Zoom for use in conducting classes. In this way, CUC is able to ensure that a remote learning experience meets the same high standards as those offered in person. In addition, CUC has long been known as an expert in online courses, as over 4,000 undergraduate and graduate students regularly enroll in courses offered completely online by CUC.

How will a change to my residential status affect my financial aid?

The Office of Financial Aid will update the cost of attendance to reflect the revised housing status of any student who previously planned to live on campus, but for whom that is no longer the case. This adjustment will impact current financial aid award packages, necessitating potential changes to the following awards:

- Augusta Addison Award (Housing Grant)
- Concordia Grant (Need-Based)
- Lutheran High School Grant (Need-Based)
- Parent PLUS Loan
- Private Loan

Students whose financial aid packages change as a result of a housing status change will be notified directly by the Office of Financial Aid.

How will housing for the fall semester be handled?

All residential students are required to submit updated housing intentions for the fall semester by **no later than Tuesday, August 11** by submitting a new [Housing Intent Form](#). Doing so will help ensure that the details related to room assignments are addressed in a timely manner. It is important to note that room assignments will be changing, as the majority of our residential students will be placed into single rooms (with a few exceptions for doubles). Additionally, these placements will be based on extracurricular involvement in order to keep common student groups together. This model will have an impact on our overall capacity and reduces the density of the population residing on campus. With this said, requests for housing will continue to be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Room and board pricing will be as follows:

- Concordia Hall rates will remain the same for both types of suites.
- All other halls will be priced at the double-room rates for each of the specific buildings.
- Meal plans will not change, as on-campus dining offerings will remain virtually the same. At this time, all dining outlets are planning to be open for the duration of the fall semester.



How does this decision impact the student check-in process?

Staff will work personally with each student to finalize their official check-in with the University. Residential students will check-in on campus. Non-residential students will complete the check-in process virtually. The check-in schedule is below; confirmation of specific dates and times will be sent out shortly after housing intentions have been received.

- **New residential** students (face-to-face check-in): Thursday, August 20
- **Returning residential** students (face-to-face check-in): Friday, August 21 or Saturday, August 22
- **New non-residential** students (virtual check-in): Monday, August 17 – Wednesday, August 19
- **Returning non-residential** students (virtual check-in): Monday, August 17 – Saturday, August 22

How will extracurriculars and student life be affected?

The Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference (NACC) recently announced that it has postponed all conference regular-season competitions and championship events through December 31, 2020. In its related announcement CUC confirmed that it would provide student-athletes with an enhanced non-traditional athletics season. CUC is still planning to provide athletes returning to campus with continued high-level opportunities for practice and competition, which will align with federal, state, and institutional health and safety protocols.

Our music ensembles have developed plans to allow participants to practice in an environment that meets the expectations of professional music educators, including the use of larger, alternate venues. Performances will be livestreamed, allowing audiences to continue to enjoy concerts as scheduled.

The Offices of Student Leadership & Involvement, Spiritual Life, and Multicultural Student Engagement have put together an exciting semester of limited in-person and special online/virtual events. These events and activities will allow students to continue to connect with one another and interact socially regardless of their location. Daily Chapel will also take place both in-person and online, ensuring that worship remains available to all students.

How will campus services function during the fall semester?

All campus offices will remain open and all student services will be available throughout the fall semester. This means that all students will receive the same level of support and be able to access campus services, both in-person and virtually.



Will students be required to receive COVID-19 tests prior to arriving on campus?

All residential students are required to get a COVID-19 test that is administered no more than 14 days prior to their arrival to campus. All records will be kept confidential in adherence to HIPAA regulations.

This can be accomplished in one of two ways:

- Students are strongly encouraged to complete a COVID-19 test through their personal healthcare provider or one nearby their home, prior to arriving on campus. In this scenario, students should provide proof of their results prior to check-in via the [COVID-19 Test Reporting Form](#).
- Students who are unable to secure a test prior to their arrival on campus are expected to immediately get tested and provide their results within 72 hours of their arrival on campus via the [COVID-19 Test Reporting Form](#).
 - COVID-19 testing near campus is available at:
Access Community Health Network, Melrose Park Testing Site
8323 W. North Avenue
Melrose Park, IL 60160
800-836-7633 (call to schedule a telehealth visit before visiting the site)
 - Other nearby sites can be located using the [Illinois Department of Public Health](#) website

Positive Tests: Students who receive positive test results prior to reporting to campus should quarantine at home for a minimum of 10 days. Return to campus will be determined in consultation with the Dean of Students office. All decisions will be based on current CDC and IDPH guidelines.

Students who receive positive test results after arriving on campus will be placed into on campus quarantine in consultation with the Dean of Students Office.

Will students who arrive from out-of-state be subject to quarantine?

Students traveling to campus from one of the states on the Suburban Cook County Quarantine List AND who plan to live on campus, must complete the University's [Travel Self-Reporting Form](#). In addition, upon arrival to campus, we ask that these students remain on campus for a minimum of 14 days. They will be able to move about campus and pick up pre-packaged meals from the Crossroads Dining Hall, but should not leave campus for any reason. All students are discouraged from engaging in non-essential travel within 14 days of arriving on campus.



Will students whose face-to-face or hybrid classes were moved to a remote format receive a tuition refund?

We recognize and sympathize with the fact that COVID-19 has caused financial hardship for many of our students and their families. However, the University will not provide tuition discounts as a result of the decision to move courses fully online. Let us explain our decision further.

Concordia-Chicago already has one of the most affordable undergraduate tuitions among private institutions in the Midwest. The University strives to provide generous financial aid packages, that combine scholarships and grants to cover a significant portion of most undergraduate tuition bills.

CUC has also provided online courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels for many years. That experience will ensure that all courses remain academically rigorous and meet high academic standards, regardless of format. In particular, online courses for our traditional undergraduate population have long been offered at the same tuition rates as those courses offered in a face-to-face format. Indeed, it actually costs the University more to shift to online learning than to continue a traditional face-to-face modality.

Have decisions been made for the spring semester?

At this time, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve on a daily basis. As a result, decisions regarding spring 2021 operations have not yet been made. The University is currently focused on delivering an outstanding academic experience this fall while keeping an eye on the latest COVID-19 developments. In a best-case scenario, we are hopeful that we will be able to again hold classes face-to-face this spring.

What led to the University's decision?

The COVID-19 pandemic remains a fluid situation that changes daily, with many projections suggesting the situation may worsen this fall, rather than improve. At the same time, the University strives to provide stability for students by minimizing disruptions to coursework. Making the decision to move all courses online prior to the start of the semester will prevent a possible modality change mid-semester.

CUC continues to pursue testing and tracing options for individuals who choose to live, study, and work on campus. However, current methodologies, on-campus test availability, contact tracing, and test result turn-around times provide significant challenges to many higher education institutions, including ours. After assessment of our current capabilities, the University felt that reducing the overall number of individuals coming to campus would greatly assist with our ability to maintain a safe campus environment, should we experience a local virus resurgence.

In addition, this plan allows us to carry out our meaningful work ethically and with integrity, as we continue to serve the varied needs of students, faculty, and staff in the best possible ways. This decision also provides the virtue of flexibility for students who choose to live on campus and participate fully in the on-campus community, which is certainly a valuable part of the traditional undergraduate student experience.