

NORTHERN NEW MEXICO COLLEGE SPRING 2021 OPERATIONS PLAN

Executive Summary

Northern New Mexico College (NNMC, or Northern) students, faculty and staff have performed remarkably well in response to the Covid-19 pandemic crisis. The College was the first in the state to move its operations into online and/or virtual modalities in March 2020 and was the first in New Mexico to announce that its operations would continue in this capacity in the fall (President Bailey made the announcement to our college community on May 26 2020). We made this decision not only for the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff, but for the health and safety of our entire community. We are conscious of the fact that many members of our Northern college team live with friends and loved ones who are particularly susceptible to the virus, and that a more holistic, community-minded approach to this public health crisis was required. After more than nine months, while we have had positive cases among our students, faculty and staff, we are proud of the fact that **so far no one has contracted the virus from either of our campuses**. Our operations planning has proven to be quite effective.

With that track record in mind, as NNMC approaches the spring 2021 semester, we plan to continue to offer our entire curriculum online. The College will make exceptions only for courses that cannot be taught in a virtual or online environment, and only for programs where the timeliness of student graduates is paramount to the state (nursing is the quintessential example). In those cases, the College will make every effort to mitigate all related health and safety risks by ensuring proper equipment, processes and procedures are available and in place.

Operations Plan Points of Contact

Overall Operations:

Dr. Rick Bailey, rick.bailey@nmmc.edu, Office: (505) 747-2140, Mobile: (505) 484-8330

Contact Tracing:

Mr. Ricky Bejarano, VP of Finances & Administration, ricky.bejarano@nmmc.edu, Office: (505) 747-5050, Mobile: (505) 670-1512

Spring Schedule

Because NNMC will be offering its spring calendar in an online manner (with exceptions noted below), at this time the calendar will remain as originally planned. Classes will commence on Jan 19, 2021. Spring Break is scheduled on March 15-19, and finals week is May 10-14. Although commencement is tentatively scheduled on Saturday, May 15, and we remain committed to an in-person commencement ceremony only when it is safe to do so, we may postpone commencement until later in the summer or fall if necessary (in addition to a separate commencement ceremony for the graduates of the Class of 2020).

Academics and Student Services

Northern is leveraging a combination of existing structures and tiered levels of assistance to educate students, and to support faculty in remote teaching endeavors. Over the last two years, NNMC enhanced its Distance Education infrastructure and capacity in anticipation of a substantial change request to offer fully online programs that will be submitted this summer. As a result, NNMC employs a peer review system to guarantee course quality and achievement of Quality Matters (QM) standards in hybrid and fully online classes. More traditional face-to-face courses all have an existing Blackboard shell that many faculty members have used to enhance their courses. Thus, the majority of the faculty members have received training and are familiar with the learning management system. In December 2020, the Higher Learning Commission Review Panel recommended approval to the HLC Board for NNMC to operate its programs fully online, even beyond the pandemic crisis response. We expect the final approval announcement in mid-January 2021.

Upon the decision to transition to emergency remote operations in the Spring of 2020, Northern conducted two surveys: one geared toward students and their technology needs, and one geared toward faculty to assess needs for support structures. As a result, 38 students (who met predefined needs) were provided with college purchased Chromebooks on a no-cost loan basis. This program extended into the Fall semester and is continuing into Spring 2021. Moreover, new laptops have been provided to all full-time faculty and staff members who had old devices or had none at all; the College also supplied 19 jetpacks for internet access, and in coordination with Rio Arriba County, acquired 58 more in December 2020 to assist students with no reliable internet access at home. Ten hotspots were added to various locations around campus to allow students an additional place to connect to Wi-Fi.

The Information Technology and Distance Education departments are currently evaluating video content management systems with the goal of implementation as soon as possible. The chosen product will complement and integrate with Blackboard, allowing faculty to easily store, discover, view, and create video content.

In further response to the faculty survey, basic Zoom and Blackboard training have been expanded. Faculty requested further resources in online pedagogy, and the College has been able to fund 15 faculty members so far.

In addition to existing QM standards, technology training, and required postings; the Office of the Provost and Departmental Chairs partnered to create guidelines and additional resources for faculty making the transition to remote learning. If more personalized assistance is needed, faculty who are highly experienced in online teaching will serve as mentors and coaches to faculty who have not completed formal training.

NNMC faculty have also proactively adopted virtual alternatives to the labs. The alternatives include commercial virtual simulators, projects in the form of peer-reviewed journal

research, and clinical observations via streaming media. A few Nursing labs and STEM labs will be delivered face-to-face in a condensed period of time while maintaining best practices in terms of PPE usage and social distancing practices. NNMC has developed protocols for these few instances where a minimal physical presence on campus is required to maintain the standards of the course. Additionally, the animal research lab will require permitting access to the two faculty members per IACUC regulations.

The institution will continue to offer uninterrupted technical support to students and faculty via the Distance Education center and the Eagle Techs (IT student technicians) who offer support and technical assistance to students, faculty, and staff with Blackboard, Zoom, and Google Suite. The Advisement Center also serves as a point of contact for students who request access to computers or the Internet in case they are unable to access these resources remotely. Initially, students can call or email the Center to be assisted. Other support services such as tutoring, library support, care team, mental health counseling, and faculty office hours have been successfully delivered through Zoom, email, or phone and will continue through Spring 2021.

NNMC academic and support departments such as the library and tutoring centers, experimented with the best ways to deliver services remotely during the Spring 2020 semester. These departments have reported out what they found successful in order to provide better and more consistent support moving forward. They will continue to monitor the aforementioned structures and assistance solutions to ensure faculty have the support they need, and the institution collectively provides the most effective environment to facilitate student academic success.

Finally, Northern allows administrative withdrawals so students can be withdrawn from classes even after the completion of a course. If students are unable to continue activities or their academic performance is affected because of the crisis, this administrative withdrawal policy will be used to guarantee academic rigor without jeopardizing the academic progress of the student or their financial aid.

Facilities and Campus Presence

All public events involving Northern, or its personnel, have continued to remain postponed until further notice. Because NNMC does not have operational residence halls, there is no need for special accommodations for students living on campus. Individuals desiring access onto the facilities on our Española or El Rito campuses must first receive permission from either the President, Provost, or Vice President of Finance and Administration. These individuals are scheduled by the Executive Office Director on a common access calendar and coordinated with the Director of Security. The schedules are sometimes adjusted slightly to minimize the number of individuals on campus at any one time. Those individuals must sign in and out at specific Entry Control Points; the college keeps a log of dates, times, and individuals for each building so that anyone either testing positive for the virus in the future, or experiencing any symptoms, will

generate an outreach and mandatory self-quarantine for any individuals who have been on campus during the affected times.

For individuals who are given access and prior approval to the campus, masks and social distancing are required. Those who refuse to comply with these guidelines may lose their right to future campus access. All individuals who enter the campus (with the exception of student testing and nursing, outlined in sections below) must enter through one north entrance of the administration building, must sign in, must submit to a temperature check, and respond to a basic questionnaire that informs the college if those entering the campus have been exposed to the Coronavirus or have traveled out of state or out of the U.S. Janitorial staff in the administration building monitor individuals' presence. Security personnel will also monitor campus behavior. Note: although student testing and nursing will have separate entry points to the campus, they still will be required to follow the temperature check and questionnaire protocols articulated above.

Currently, administrative and support staff from offices including the registrar, financial aid, cash control, payroll, accounts payable and receivable, and financial reporting have an intermittent presence in a limited area on campus only when required to maintain essential business functions. A majority of the Business Office Staff have performed their functions remotely through VPN, to limit on-campus time as much as possible. This will continue to ensure that accounts are paid to date; mailed in payments are accurately recorded and deposited; financial reporting remains current; fiscal compliance requirements of Federal and State Grants remain current; and, most importantly, that payroll is processed timely to avert financial hardship to our faculty, staff, and work-study students.

All Maintenance and Custodial Staff (MCS) have been directed to refrain from any and all contact with students, faculty, non-MCS staff and visitors that have been permitted onto either of our campuses; correspondingly, all personnel must refrain from approaching MCS while on campus. The Facilities and Maintenance Director will continue to assign work to each MCS member, to include thorough cleaning protocols in all facilities where activity is planned or even potentially possible. The College has procured special cleaning devices such as sprayers and covid-compliant cleansers to sanitize all areas. MCS are not authorized to receive requests, assignments, or direction from anyone other than the Director of Facilities (this includes the President and both Vice-Presidents). Our custodians will be assigned to one building each while they work on campus. Custodians have been directed that they will not permit other staff, faculty or students to enter into their assigned respective buildings. Grounds Keepers and Facilities Technicians also will be assigned work only by the Facilities Director. In light of the fact that MCS continue to have much catch-up to do, no special requests for MCS services will be accepted until further notice. For individuals who have been given permission to be on campus, if a facilities emergency such as a leak, broken water line, etc., is discovered, they are required to report this to Security immediately and Security will ensure that the Facilities Director is notified. For additional safety precautions, with regard to our MCS employees, the minimum social

distancing space requirement is 20 feet. This distancing requirement applies regardless of location (inside or outside). This will help NNMC ensure that we do everything possible to protect our MCS as well as other staff and visitors while they are on campus.

Hi-Set testing is conducted in the administration building. Testing is limited to 8 individuals and only 8 computers are available for testing. Students to be tested enter and depart through a separate entrance from other individuals. All individuals who enter the administration building for Hi-Set testing must sign in or be signed in by security staff, must submit to a temperature check, and respond to a basic questionnaire that informs the college if those entering the campus have been exposed to the Coronavirus or have traveled out of state or out of the U.S. After testing is complete, the students tested depart through a separate entrance from which they entered the testing area. Janitorial staff immediately cleans the entire area (including computer equipment) and then disinfects the area with disinfecting spray. No one may work or even enter the testing area until at least two days have lapsed between testing groups. As such, testing can only be conducted twice weekly.

The nursing program occupies a separate building. When nursing labs resume in the spring (see schedule below), students and faculty will be limited to one entrance point and one exit point. All individuals who enter the nursing building for labs must sign in or be signed in by security staff, must submit to a temperature check, and respond to a basic questionnaire that informs the college if those entering the campus have been exposed to the Coronavirus or have traveled out of state or out of the U.S. A custodian will be assigned to the nursing building to ensure that bathrooms are regularly monitored, cleaned and disinfected. The custodian will clean and disinfect the lab between classes. Details for the nursing exceptions are outlined below.

Exception for Nursing Face-to-Face Courses

Northern New Mexico College (NNMC) Department of Nursing and Health Sciences (heretofore referred to as “department”) is committed to ensuring the safety of our nursing students, faculty, and staff. The department follows recommendations and guidelines put forth from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH), and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) for mitigating the risk of Covid-19 spread.

The guidelines set forth in this document reflect the recommendations from the aforementioned bodies and must be adhered to by all Associate Degree Program in Nursing (AND) students and faculty participating in simulation and/or skills laboratories.

Guiding Principles to Keep in Mind

1. Students will be required to test for Covid-19 on a designated date (TBD) before the start of nursing skills or simulation labs. A mobile testing unit will be on campus to perform the testing. This is a free service.

2. If a student tests positive for Covid-19 during this testing, they will need to withdraw from the ADN program for the Spring 2021 semester and follow the protocol for self-isolation.
3. If at any time, during the course of nursing studies a student tests positive for Covid-19, the student will be required to withdraw from the nursing program.
4. Any student who is sick with Covid-19 symptoms (fever, cough, malaise, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell) or has been potentially exposed to someone with Covid-19 is to follow CDC guidance to self-isolate or stay at home. The student will not be allowed to return to class until the student can verify absence of illness with a negative Covid-19 test.
5. Only students enrolled in nursing skills/clinical courses, nurse aide students, nursing faculty, and essential college and department support staff (facilities staff, Lab Assistant, Simulation Coordinator) will be allowed in the nursing building.
6. Cloth or medical face masks must be used when in the nursing building.
7. The cloth or medical face mask must cover the nose and mouth at all times. Do not touch the face coverings or face.
8. Adhere to social distancing of > 6 feet as appropriate. There may be instances when performing a skill (such as taking a blood pressure or listening to breath sounds) that social distancing of > 6 feet is not possible. In these instances, make sure to properly sanitize your hands before and after performing the skill.
9. Frequent handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds is recommended.
10. If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol can be used.
11. Coughs and sneezes should be covered with a tissue or the inside of your elbow.
12. Used tissue should be thrown in the trash, and hands washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not easily available, hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol can be used.
13. Students are not allowed to drink from the nursing building water fountains or sink faucets. Students are advised to bring a water bottle with enough water to last them through the simulation or skills lab day.
14. Students are not allowed to eat in the nursing building. Meals can be eaten in the lawn area or in the car.

Guidelines for Participation in Simulation and Skills Lab

1. Students will arrive for the simulation/skills lab at the assigned time with either a cloth or medical mask on.
2. Students are not allowed to congregate in the nursing building. They must wait outside the building until the assigned clinical time.
3. Students will enter the nursing building through the north entrance (including sign in procedures as stated in the *Facilities* section above) and go up the stairs to the 2nd floor.

4. If the student is unable to climb the stairs to the 2nd floor, the student will be directed to the elevator. Only one person at a time will be allowed in elevator.
5. Upon arriving on the 2nd floor, students will answer screening questions regarding recent travel, symptoms, or possible exposure. Clinical instructors will perform and document the screening.
6. Students will have their temperature taken by the clinical instructor.
7. If a student has a temperature of 100.4 or above, answers “YES” to travel questions, has been in contact with a Covid-19 exposed person, or discloses COVID symptoms as described by the CDC, the student will be required to immediately return to their car and contact their primary care provider for further information and direction.
8. If the student has a negative symptom criteria assessment, the student will remove and store their cloth or medical mask, sanitize their hands, and don a required medical mask distributed by the instructor.
9. Items brought into the skills lab should be kept at a minimum. Students will be required to wipe down every item brought into the skills/simulation lab, including textbooks with disinfectant wipes.
10. Students are allowed to bring the program issued tote bag with individual supplies into the lab area if required by the instructor to do so.
11. Eight students will be allowed into the skills/simulation lab at a time
12. A medical mask will be issued to the students by the instructor for each skills/simulation experience.
13. Students will follow the procedures for the simulation/laboratory experience as outlined by their instructor.
14. At the conclusion of the experience, students will remove their medical mask and dispose of it as per protocol.
15. Students will sanitize their hands, redon their personal mask, and leave the nursing building through the north exit as soon as possible.
16. Cleaning and disinfecting of the simulation and skills lab areas will be conducted after each skills/simulation experience using EPA approved disinfectants against Covid-19. This will be coordinated with Facilities staff for MCS support.

References for Nursing Section Above

American Association of Colleges of Nursing (2020). Considerations for COVID-19 preparedness and response in U.S. schools of nursing. AACN. Retrieved from: www.aacnnursing.org

Centers for Disease Control, (2020). Coronavirus (COVID-19). Retrieved from: www.cdc.gov

New Mexico Department of Health (2020). What you need to know about Corona virus disease— Covid -19. Retrieved from: <https://cv.nmhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2019-ncov-factsheet-NMDOH.pdf>

**Department of Nursing & Health Sciences
In Person Skills Lab Schedule Spring Semester 2021**

Date	Day	Time	Room
1/22/21—5/14/21	Fridays	8am-1:30pm	VE 204
1/19/21	Tuesday	8am-3pm	VE 201, 203, 204, 205
1/21/21	Thursday	8am-3pm	VE 201, 203, 204, 205
1/26/21	Tuesday	8am-3pm	VE 204, 205
2/9/21	Tuesday	8am-3pm	VE 201, 203
2/11/21	Thursday	8am-3pm	VE 201, 203
2/16/21	Tuesday	8am-3pm	VE 201, 203
2/23/21	Tuesday	8am-3pm	VE 201, 203
2/25/21	Thursday	8am-3pm	VE 201, 203
3/2/21	Tuesday	8am-3pm	VE 201, 203
4/5/21	Monday	8am-3pm	VE 201, 203
4/12/21	Monday	8am-3pm	VE 201, 203

Academic Testing

The College will allow case-by-case exceptions for certain testing requirements. For example, the College maintains a High School Equivalency program that has been rated in the top three programs in the nation for three years in a row. There are no alternatives (online testing, etc.) for the HISET completion tests. The College converted its Northern Event Center (one of the largest indoor spaces on our Española campus) into a temporary testing facility, whereby students will be more than 12 feet apart at all times (the stations are approximately 20 feet apart) and monitored by a test proctor fully versed in virus mitigation procedures.

Health Provider Partnerships

Northern has partnered with two local entities to provide coronavirus testing for our personnel and their families. First, NNMC partnered with *Las Clinicas del Norte (LCDN)*, to provide testing to all interested students, faculty, staff, and immediate family members. In June 2020, 68 Northern personnel were tested (in the northwest parking lot of our Española campus). We are happy to report that all 68 tests came back negative. We realize that this perfect record likely will not last forever, but we are encouraged that our processes and procedures have helped to mitigate the spread of the virus among our team-members, and thus we will continue to advocate for our stringent health and safety practices. Northern has also conducting periodic tests on our El Rito campus in partnership with LCDN, open to all community members.

We hosted a second Española campus testing event, this time open not just to Northern personnel, but to all community members. This testing occurred on July 27 in the same parking lot on our Española campus, and is being done in partnership with the *New Mexico Department of Health (NMDoH)* and *Las Cumbres Community Services (LCCS)*. Northern plans on continuing

its strong relationships with NMDoH, LCCS, and LCDN to continue to provide robust testing opportunities for our college and our community.

In November 2020, Northern partnered with the State Department of Health, Department of Workforce Solutions, Rio Arriba County Health and Human Services, the City of Española, the Higher Education Department, the NM National Guard, Presbyterian Health Services, El Centro Family Health, and many other community organizations and volunteers, to offer DAILY testing free and available to all community members in a safe, drive-through process utilizing the Curative PCR test. The testing has proven to be quite successful thus far, with an average of over 200 tests administered daily since last month. We plan to continue the testing throughout the spring:

FREE DAILY COVID-19 TESTING AT NORTHERN NEW MEXICO COLLEGE

For COVID-19 TESTING:
Enter via N. Railroad Ave., exit campus to Paseo de Oñate.
Open 7 days / 10 am to 2 pm / Library Parking Area

NORTHERN NEW MEXICO COLLEGE / ESPAÑOLA CAMPUS
 921 Paseo de Oñate, Española, NM 87532

In Spring 2020, Northern appointed its Vice President for Finance and Administration to be the institution’s point of contact to NMDoH for the purposes of contract tracing and analysis. Northern will continue to use its own entry control point logs to assist with contact tracing

efforts in case an identified positive case has been on either campus, including notifying other individuals who had been on the same campus that day. Any individuals contacted in this process will be required to self-quarantine for 14 days in observance of state and federal guidelines.

Northern continues to enjoy an excellent relationship with Presbyterian Española Hospital, which is one of the community's largest regional medical centers. Although 95% (or more) of Northern's curricula will continue to be given online, Northern will continue to partner with Presbyterian for its Rapid Response Testing function for our students, faculty and staff in support of the 5% of classes that must be done in an on-campus modality. In addition, before Northern's personnel went on lockdown in March 2020, the facilities staff on the president's orders reconfigured the Eagle Sportsplex on the Española campus to allow for the possibility of a hospital annex there (vinyl flooring was placed over the basketball court and bleachers were retracted to optimize space). This may also be used as a future community vaccination facility (please see the end of this document for details). Northern's president has been in contact with the Army Corps of Engineers to discuss options.

Athletics

Northern cancelled its fall 2020 programming (which affected cross country) and its winter/spring 2021 programming (which included basketball and golf); these cancellations are in effect until further notice. Northern will consider fall 2021 programming only after coordinating with the Department of Higher Education and the Office of the Governor, and in consultation with the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA). Once all of those agencies are satisfied, NNMC will propose a formal removal of its postponement position to the NNMC Board of Regents.

Communications

The NNMC Communications and Marketing Office is responsible for the coordination and distribution of up-to-date information regarding the changes and adjustments in our operations. Institutional information will be communicated through a variety of means (see below) to all stakeholders.

NNMC utilizes various communication methods including email, website alert banners, text messaging, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube videos, and outside media outlets such as print and/or digital newspapers and radio. Day-to-day course-level communication between faculty and students are done primarily via Blackboard and email. The College President also delivers timely video updates through email and social media with institutional-level strategic considerations and decisions.

For institution-wide messaging, the website will be the primary means of transmitting information, which includes a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section to capture concerns that the leadership team observes as emerging issues and a new website chat feature. All

College students, faculty, and staff are included in an emergency alert system that delivers text messages to personal cell phones. The alert system will only be used to signal urgent updates to the website information platform. Also, the College created a special email account (Covid19@nmmc.edu) so that any College or community member can send messages, ask questions, or offer specific information to the College for possible inclusion in broadcast messaging.

Finally, in spring 2020, NNMC contracted with *Signal Vine*, a two-way communication texting platform, that is currently being deployed to improve communications among stakeholders via a cell phone messaging system.

Looking Ahead to Fall 2021 and Beyond

NNMC typically plans its fall calendar in mid-March each year. In all likelihood, there will not be clarity on the potential for a widely available vaccine to the virus by then. Thus, the College will engage in preparations this spring for the possibility of continuing our current course of action in fall 2021. We will continue to assess the situation and will only transition to more face-to-face programming based on two primary variables: (1) the accessibility and availability of a viable vaccine; and/or (2) the presence of herd immunity in our state and region. The college may also consider allowing a few more courses in a face-to-face modality, particularly in the Branch Community College, with hands-on classes in plumbing and electrician programs originally slated to start in January 2021 (but possibly taking place in summer or fall 2021 depending on the two variables above). However, such exceptions will only be made, as they are this spring with nursing, once all mitigation considerations have been met. In addition, any changes will be made in consultation with the Higher Education Department and the Office of the Governor. The College will continue to keep the health and safety of its students, faculty, staff and community as the primary drivers of our strategic and operational decision-making.