

# Recommendations from the Future Operations Workgroup

June 1, 2020

## Background

The Future Operations Workgroup was established by President Noland to develop recommendations and a plan for the university leadership on how best to transition from the remote operational state of the university imposed during the 2020 spring semester due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Membership

David Linville, executive vice provost for academics and health (workgroup chair)

Joe Bidwell, chair of the Department of Biology

Tom Donohoe, registrar

Kim Edwards, space management coordinator

Stephen Hendrix, president of the Faculty Senate

Betsy Kearney, director of budget development and business process improvement

Sam Mayhew, assistant vice president for student life and enrollment

Matt McGahey, senior associate athletic director

Shivam Patel, president of the Student Government Association

Randy Wykoff, dean of the College of Public Health

President Noland provided the workgroup with the following charge at its first meeting held on April 29, 2020:

*“Develop recommendations and a plan to return to appropriate academic operations, campus operations, and business operations.”*

Drs. Bishop and Green joined President Noland for the meeting’s discussion, providing background from the senior leadership team and the deliberations involved to date. The workgroup understood the importance of employing the same principles of being nimble and flexible used during the necessary physical distancing measures imposed during the spring semester in its consideration of options to safely resume campus operations for faculty, staff, students and visitors.

## Guiding Principles

The workgroup believes the university’s plan for future operations should be easily adapted to meet the needs of the changing COVID-19 environment. This provides the university with the ability to loosen or restrict physical distancing and other safety measures in response to public health outcomes. The workgroup approached its task using guidance provided in publications from the federal government including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the State of Tennessee, and local health departments. Additionally, plans shared by other universities and

reports from professional and trade associations provided further insight into the changes being implemented across higher education.

The following guiding principles were used to inform the workgroup's deliberations:

- Create options and scenarios that prioritize the safety of faculty, staff, students, and visitors.
- Provide flexibility for employees and students who may need to continue working and learning from a remote environment.
- Maintain focus on the university's mission to ensure the continuity of academic instruction, research, and service while safeguarding students' continued progression in their courses of study.
- Develop ideas and solutions that are easily implemented and do not unnecessarily complicate processes.
- Promote principles that highlight individual responsibility for the health of the campus and community.
- Provide departments and units with the flexibility to innovate and implement plans which complement the workgroup's recommendations.

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## **Recommendations**

The workgroup recommends the university use a framework of stages to guide its plans for operations. We submit this document with significant detail for each stage, recognizing the need to provide departments and units on campus with some guidance while balancing the prescriptive nature of guidelines with flexibility for innovation and creativity at the unit level. We recommend the senior leadership use this document as a baseline plan, making necessary changes and introducing new parameters as needed to ensure the continued operation of the university in a safe manner. The plans outlined in this document should not remain static.

These recommendations would apply to all faculty, staff, students, and visitors. They apply to all university operations on and off campus including instructional sites in Kingsport, Bristol, Elizabethton, Sevierville, Abingdon, and Asheville. We recognize that select modifications may need to be considered for situations that may arise at distant sites and for students who are working at external sites for required clinical or experiential exposure.

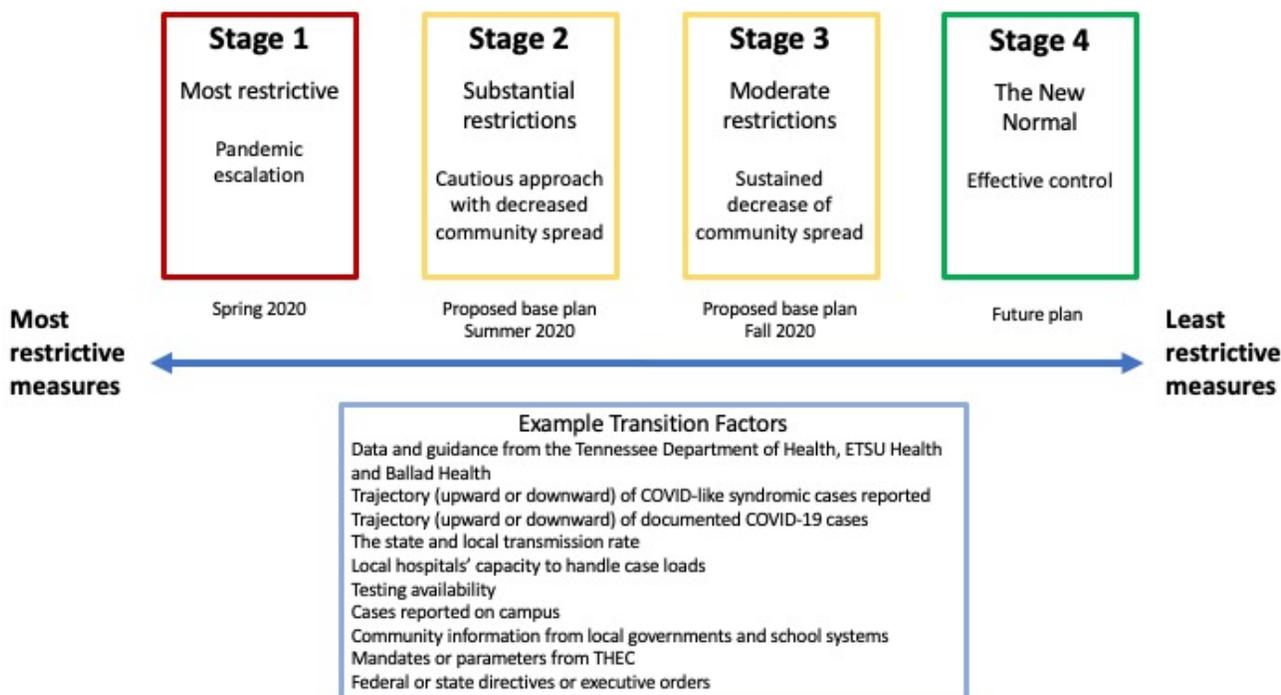
Central to successfully implementing a plan, the workgroup recommends a robust communication plan for sharing decisions about university operations, and an on-going education plan for faculty, staff and students. The education plan should have a required individual training component. Critical in the messaging is the need to highlight individual responsibility for the collective health and safety of the campus. Serious consideration should be taken for including a by-stander campaign as one strategy to encourage individuals to constructively address behaviors and situations that fall short of the expectations for promoting health and safety.

The workgroup recommends senior leadership adopt Stage 2 as the operating plan for summer 2020. Should pandemic conditions continue improving, the workgroup envisions Stage 3 as the operating plan for starting the fall 2020 semester. In light of a potential resurgence of COVID-19 cases in late fall and early winter, the workgroup strongly recommends the senior leadership consider modifying the fall 2020 semester calendar to complete all face-to-face activities prior to the Thanksgiving break. By using select holidays and fall break as instruction days, all instruction could be completed before Thanksgiving with online exams occurring after the break. These schedule changes would limit the potential spread of the virus in the campus community following Thanksgiving, should a seasonal resurgence occur. In order to implement Stage 3 and potentially an altered fall calendar, the workgroup recommends that a decision be made in early summer to provide faculty, staff, and students the opportunity to prepare.

## Framework

The workgroup recommends the following operating stages to be used on a continuum for resuming campus activities during the summer and starting the 2020 fall semester. The stages are designed to facilitate sliding back and forth to address the need for loosening or restricting physical distancing measures because of the pandemic. Such flexibility allows the ability to swiftly implement more stringent measures should they become necessary.

### Stage Overview



## Summary of Stages

### Stage 1 – Most Restrictive Measures (similar to 2020 spring semester status)

#### Pandemic escalation

- All campus instruction provided remotely using D2L and Zoom.
- Experiential learning in the community suspended.
- Residence halls minimally occupied.
- Employees working remotely.
- Research and service activities suspended with few exceptions.
- Limited campus access.
- University events canceled or postponed.
- Travel suspended.
- All Study Abroad and other international programs suspended.
- Athletic practice and competition suspended.

### Stage 2 – Substantial Restrictions (proposed base plan for 2020 summer term)

#### Cautious approach with decreased community spread of virus

- All campus instruction provided remotely using D2L and Zoom with few possible exceptions to allow on campus instruction in select courses requiring specialized equipment, clinical rotations, or other face-to-face learning.
- Experiential learning in the community is possible on a case by case basis in partnership with community sites (*e.g.*, clinical rotations, internships, externships, service learning) provided the host organization abides by appropriate safety standards.
- Residence halls minimally occupied.
- Employees working both remotely where possible, with some on campus, including options for staffing rotations within offices.
- Research and service activities permitted with physical distancing and other safety measures.
- No meetings or gatherings with more than 10 individuals.
- All individuals must use face coverings when on campus.
- Crowd control and waiting line measures in place to promote physical distancing (plexiglass at select service windows, spaced marks on floors).
- Enhanced cleaning of public spaces.
- Large university events canceled or postponed.
- Festivals, camps, and conferences canceled or postponed.
- Non-essential travel suspended.
- All Study Abroad and other international programs for ETSU students suspended.
- Athletic competition possible without spectators, limited practices or meetings based on guidance from the NCAA and Southern Conference.

### **Stage 3 – Moderate Restrictions** (proposed base plan for 2020 fall semester)

#### **Effective responses with sustained decrease of community spread of virus**

- Faculty will identify courses, competencies, or experiences that can only be acquired in a face-to-face setting. These courses, competencies and experiences will be the first priority for using classrooms, teaching labs and other on-ground resources.
- All other academic material will be offered in a hybrid format, to assure all students have an opportunity for both on-line and on-ground learning. Achieving a direct faculty-to-student interface, wherever possible, should be a priority, even if this can not happen at every regularly scheduled class session.
- Laboratory and on campus experiential courses permitted with physical distancing and other safety measures.
- Experiential learning in the community with select limitations.
- Online instructional resources are used to address limitations with face-to-face instruction.
- Residence halls occupied with significant efforts to limit face-to-face exposure.
- Employees working on campus with remote work option available for those who identify an elevated risk of COVID-19 exposure to themselves or others in their household.
- Research and service activities permitted with physical distancing and other safety measures.
- All Individuals must use face coverings when on campus.
- Crowd control and waiting line measures in place to promote physical distancing (plexiglass at select service windows, spaced marks on floors).
- Enhanced cleaning of public spaces.
- Select large university events possible with safety plans in place.
- Outgoing university-related domestic travel is suspended with limited exceptions.
- Outgoing university-related international travel is suspended.
- Study Abroad and other international programs for ETSU students suspended.
- Athletic competition possible based on guidance from the NCAA and Southern Conference.

### **Stage 4 – The New Normal** (future plan)

#### **Effective control**

- On campus face-to-face instruction, limited physical distancing expectations.
- Laboratory and on campus experiential courses permitted.
- Experiential learning in the community with few limitations.
- Residence halls occupied.
- Employees working on campus with remote work option available with approval.
- Research and service activities continue with appropriate physical distancing measures.
- Large university events permitted.
- Domestic and international travel permitted.
- Athletic competition permitted.

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## Individual Responsibility

Individuals are expected to follow guidelines and principles that promote the health of the campus and community at large. These measures help protect one another and slow the spread of the virus. Because medical experts believe the continued spread of the virus is partially due to contagious people who have no symptoms, all faculty, staff, students, and visitors are asked to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Stay home when feeling ill, when exposed to COVID-19 (*e.g.*, positive household member case), or if diagnosed with a confirmed case of COVID-19. To reinforce individual responsibility, faculty must demonstrate flexibility with students who are absent from class due to illness or quarantine. Likewise, supervisors must be flexible with employees who are absent due to illness or quarantine.
- Employees or students who are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 according to the CDC are encouraged to work with their supervisors or course faculty to identify possible alternatives for work and academic instruction.
- Employees and students who are diagnosed with a confirmed case of COVID-19 should notify the university.
- Wash hands more frequently, avoid touching face, practice good respiratory etiquette.
- Wear an appropriate face covering to help protect against the spread of the virus.
- Practice recommended physical distancing to the greatest extent possible.
- Adhere to notices and instructions posted around campus related to COVID-19 mitigation.
- Abide by specific safety and health parameters that are outlined in this document and in future directives provided by the university.

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## Detailed Operating Stages

### Stage 1 – Most Restrictive

#### Parameters, Considerations, and Needed Actions

(Similar to operating state at the end of 2020 spring semester)

#### Stage 1 Parameters

##### Employees and Offices

- Employees working remotely.
- Clinical faculty and staff are working in ETSU Health locations that remain open to provide patient care. Decisions about opening or closing ETSU Health clinical locations should be made in conjunction with the Vice President for Clinical Affairs.

- Offices closed with department or unit level plans for limited, occasional access to offices for business continuity (*e.g.*, paper dependent processes, bank deposits).
- Select employees permitted on campus for maintaining facilities and certain operations.
- Centralized staff pool identified and available to work remotely. Due to disruption of needing to work remotely, a centralized staff pool provides employees the opportunity to shift to a different area with unmet needs.
- Student APS workers, Federal Work Study (FWS) workers, and Regular Work Study (RWS) recipients not reporting to work.

#### Travel

- All outgoing university-related domestic travel is suspended.
- All outgoing university-related international travel is suspended.
- All Study Abroad and other international programs for ETSU students are suspended.
- Recommendation for personal travel and international students traveling to ETSU is to follow the most current guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other appropriate authorities.

#### Academic Instruction

- All campus instruction provided remotely using D2L and Zoom.
- Experiential learning on campus and in the community is suspended.
- The Testing Center in the Sherrod Library is closed and unable to provide exam services.
- University School provides remote instruction.

#### Research

- Non-critical, on-campus research activities and field research suspended with few exceptions.
- Minimal access permitted to laboratories for critical activities (maintenance of animals, unique reagents, and essential equipment and materials).
- Approval for exceptions and access to maintain critical research activities is provided by the Vice Provost for Research in discussion with the college dean.
- Research procedures involving person-to-person interaction with participants that do not involve administration of a drug, medical device, or stabilization of a high-risk condition as a therapeutic benefit are temporarily paused or modified to allow for remote study visits.
- All studies should have a contingency plan in place that details how the study is being conducted during the pandemic.
- Other research and scholarship activities that can occur remotely continues (*e.g.*, analyzing data, writing and reviewing manuscripts, preparing presentations, developing new grant proposals, convening online discussions with students and lab staff, *etc.*).
- ORSPA accepting electronic approvals for documents such as proposals, contracts, and other agreements. Specific guidelines and detailed information about research activities, operations, awards, and IRB are provided on the ORSPA website.

#### Athletics

- All athletics-related activities are suspended, including competition, championships, organized practices and meetings.

#### Residence Halls and Dining Services

- Residence halls minimally occupied and limited to students granted an exception to live on campus.
- Grab and go meal services only.
- Isolation plans in place for students who test positive or are in quarantine because of exposure.
- Residence halls may provide accommodations for select outside organizations according to its operations plan (*e.g.*, Ballad Health to house health care workers).

#### Student Life and Campus Services

- Student support services continue providing assistance via remote connection including tutoring, Disability Services, academic advising, Financial Aid, and the Counseling Center.
- Virtual orientation is provided for new students.
- Post Office window services open.
- Sherrod Library building is closed; services and collections available online.
- Culp Center closed.
- Basler Center for Physical Activity/CPA closed. Intramural activities and Club Sports suspended.
- Wi-Fi accessible for individuals in personal vehicles at the following parking locations: Carillon/Bell Tower parking areas between Gilbreath Hall and Burgin Dossett, parking lot at 902 Maple Street, and southwest corner of the Parking Garage.
- ETSU Bookstore closed, online orders only.
- Bucky's Food Pantry available to assist students.
- Child Study Center closed.
- Little Bucs closed.

#### Visitors to Campus

- University events canceled or postponed.
- Festivals, camps, and conferences canceled or postponed.
- Campus tours suspended with options available for online, virtual visits for prospective students.

#### Safety, Health, and Security

- All individuals must use appropriate face coverings on campus when around others.
- University Health Center open with reduced hours, telehealth appointments available.
- Select employees permitted on campus operate under physical distancing protocols and use of appropriate face coverings.
- Clinical faculty and staff working with patients should follow protocols and procedures provided by ETSU Health clinical leadership.

### **Stage 1 Considerations**

- Students will expect higher quality online instruction in the future since there is ample time to prepare if this stage is reimplemented at some point (compared expectations after the quick shift to remote instruction that occurred in spring 2020).
- Availability of at home technology access for students and faculty.
- Some practical laboratory or other face-to-face experiences may not be possible and require modifications of course learning outcomes.
- Departments and units should be mindful of the need for planning for continuity of services should faculty or staff become ill.

### **Stage 1 Needed Actions**

- Permission requested or notice sent to regulatory agencies, SACSCOC, and program accreditors (as required) in order to provide remote instruction to students.
- Review and possibly modify select academic policies (Pass/Fail grading option, suspending academic dismissals).
- Human Resources should review employment policies and procedures to provide flexibility related to working remotely.
- Human Resources should update centralized staffing pool available to work remotely.

## **Stage 2 – Substantial Restrictions**

### **Parameters, Considerations, and Needed Actions**

(Proposed base operating plan for the 2020 summer term)

#### **Stage 2 Parameters**

##### Employees and Offices

- Employees working both remotely and on campus with options in place for staffing rotations in offices to maintain physical distancing expectations. For example, certain employees could work on campus on select days while the remaining office staff work remotely. Offices should implement a plan to provide for this type of decreased staffing density.
- Flexibility is provided for employees who may need to work remotely (*e.g.*, individuals who identify themselves or immediate family members to be at high risk as defined by the CDC). Supervisors should work with employees to explore options.
- Clinical faculty and staff are working in ETSU Health locations that remain open to provide patient care. Decisions about opening or closing ETSU Health clinical locations should be made in conjunction with the Vice President for Clinical Affairs.
- Offices open with options for extended hours to provide flexibility for service and staffing rotations.
- Centralized staff pool identified and available to have employees work in a different area. Due to disruption of services normally provided on campus, a centralized staff pool provides employees the opportunity to shift to a different area on campus with unmet needs.

- Academic classrooms on campus might temporarily be used to provide flexible space to promote physical distancing of employees.
- Student APS workers, Federal Work Study (FWS) workers, and Regular Work Study (RWS) recipients not physically reporting to work. There remains the potential for select student workers or temporarily employed (contracted) students to work remotely.

#### Travel

- Outgoing university-related domestic travel is suspended including travel for participation in conferences, symposia, and other events. Travel by vehicle within the region (typically covered by blanket travel authorizations) for reaching ETSU sites is permitted. Other regional travel, which may include local visits to donors by advancement staff or university officials required to attend state meetings in Nashville or other locations, is permitted with prior authorization by the appropriate vice president. Limited exceptions for other domestic travel may be authorized by the appropriate vice president.
- All outgoing university-related international travel is suspended.
- All Study Abroad and other international programs for ETSU students are suspended.
- Recommendation for personal travel and international students traveling to ETSU is to follow the most current guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other appropriate federal agencies.

#### Academic Instruction

- All campus instruction provided remotely using D2L and Zoom with few possible exceptions to allow on campus instruction in select courses requiring specialized equipment, clinical rotations, or other face-to-face learning. These activities would be limited to students residing locally or those granted exceptions to remain in residence halls. Permission for such on-campus instructional activities must be granted by the college dean.
- Experiential learning in the community possible on program by program basis in partnership with community sites with approval by the college dean.
- The Testing Center in the Sherrod Library is closed and unable to provide exam services.
- University School must operate within the guidelines of its pandemic operations plan.

#### Research

- Laboratory and field research activities permitted within appropriate safety parameters.
- Graduate students are permitted to participate in research activities that are required for their academic course of study.
- Undergraduate students supported by NIH R15 grants or NSF grants are permitted to participate in research activities. Additionally, Honors-in-Discipline students and University Honors Scholars students are permitted to participate in research activities that are required for their academic course of study.

- Student or faculty research projects requiring access to community sites including local schools, health facilities or other comparable sites may face additional restrictions, including a limit on the number of ETSU personnel allowed to enter the campus or clinic. The department or college may need to prioritize projects that require such access.
- All lab personnel should wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including masks (need not be medical masks, any appropriate face covering (double-ply) would suffice), reusable eye protection and gloves while working in the labs. Individuals working at off-campus field sites should wear PPE appropriate for working conditions and practice physical distancing.
- Physical distancing should be practiced as much as possible; hand washing and other hygienic practices implemented as appropriate.
- It is recommended that research lab meetings be conducted via Zoom to limit interactions.
- COVID-19 research studies are permitted to proceed with requirements for PPE use by investigator and subjects.
- Other research procedures involving person-to-person interaction are permitted with the requirement of appropriate PPE use by the investigators and subjects.
- Specific guidelines and detailed information about research activities, operations, awards, and IRB are provided on the ORSPA website.

#### Athletics

- As detailed in the Department of Athletics' operations plan, team activities including meetings, strength and conditioning sessions, and practices may occur on a modified schedule in accordance with guidelines issued by the NCAA and Southern Conference.
- Competition, if permitted by NCAA and Southern Conference, occurs without spectators.

#### Residence Halls and Dining Services

- Residence halls minimally occupied and limited to students granted an exception to live on campus.
- Grab and go meal services only.
- Isolation plans in place for residence hall students who test positive or are in quarantine because of exposure.
- Residence halls may provide accommodations for select outside organizations according to its operations plan (*e.g.*, Ballad Health to house health care workers).

#### Student Life and Campus Services

- Student support services continue providing assistance via remote connection including tutoring, Disability Services, academic advising, Financial Aid, and the Counseling Center.
- Virtual orientation is provided for new students.
- Select services available to students in Burgin Dossett Hall operating on potentially modified schedules including Admissions, Bursar's Office service windows, Financial Aid, Registrar's Office, Records, and Graduation Office.

- Post Office window services open.
- Sherrod Library offices open to employees only with the building closed; services and collections available online. Testing Center services suspended.
- Culp Center offices open to employees only with the building closed. Limited access is provided to the Post Office and dining hall.
- ETSU Bookstore closed, online orders only.
- Basler Center for Physical Activity/CPA closed. Intramural activities and Club Sports suspended.
- Wi-Fi accessible for individuals in personal vehicles at the following parking locations: Carillon/Bell Tower parking areas between Gilbreath Hall and Burgin Dossett, parking lot at 902 Maple Street, and southwest corner of the Parking Garage.
- Bucky's Food Pantry available to assist students.
- Child Study Center closed.
- Little Bucs closed.

#### Visitors to Campus

- University events both on and off campus canceled or postponed.
- Festivals, camps, and conferences canceled or postponed.
- Campus tours possible with small numbers of individuals; options available for online, virtual visits for prospective students.

#### Safety, Health, and Security

- All individuals must use appropriate face coverings on campus when around others.
- No meetings or gatherings with more than 10 individuals.
- Use Zoom to facilitate meetings and remote services with employees and students.
- Crowd control and waiting line measures in place to promote physical distancing (plexiglass at select service windows, spaced marks on floors to show 6 feet of physical distancing).
- University Health Center open with reduced hours, telehealth appointments available.
- Clinical faculty and staff working with patients should follow specific protocols and procedures provided by ETSU Health clinical leadership.
- Heightened cleaning of public spaces.

#### **Stage 2 Considerations**

- Complete transitioning from Stage 1 to Stage 2 should occur as quickly as possible, but with sufficient time to ensure each of the Stage 2 Needed Actions listed below can be accomplished.
- Departments and units should be mindful of the need for planning for continuity of services should faculty or staff become ill.

#### **Stage 2 Needed Actions**

- Permission is requested or notice sent to SACSCOC and program accreditors (as required) in order to provide remote instruction to students.

- Review and possibly modify select academic policies (Pass/Fail grading option, suspending academic dismissals).
- Human Resources should review employment policies and procedures to provide flexibility related to working remotely.
- Human Resources should update centralized staffing pool available to work in different areas with unmet needs.
- Each department and unit office creates a plan to provide for decreased staffing density in order to accommodate physical distancing expectations.
- Facilities Management creates a plan to assist departments and units with service-oriented spaces in Burgin Dossett Hall and select other campus locations in evaluating and installing plastic or plexiglass shields at select service windows or desks.
- Facilities Management creates a plan for enhanced custodial cleaning services in public spaces.
- Department of Athletics creates an operations plan with guidelines and procedures for team activities and student athlete expectations consistent with the university's operating stage in the context of NCAA and Southern Conference directives.
- Department of Housing and Residence Life updates its process for reviewing and granting individual students an exception for remaining on campus in residence halls.
- Department of Housing and Residence Life reviews and updates its existing pandemic operating guidelines including isolation and quarantine plans.
- Dining Services creates or updates existing plans for grab and go services and support for students isolated or quarantined in residence halls.
- The University School updates its pandemic operations plan.
- The Registrar creates guidelines or a protocol on temporary use of academic space on campus for employee flexible workspace to promote physical distancing or potentially for use by University School.
- A central reporting system should be created for employees and students to report they have been diagnosed with COVID-19. It is important to capture this information to ensure that any additional cleaning or safety measures are taken into consideration. It also provides needed information about cases on campus that can be used in making decisions about campus operations.
- A communication plan is coordinated through University Relations on how the university is transitioning to this stage.

### **Stage 3 – Moderate Restrictions**

#### **Parameters, Considerations, and Needed Actions**

(Proposed base operating plan for the 2020 fall semester)

#### **Stage 3 Parameters**

##### Employees and Offices

- Employees working both remotely and on campus, options in place for staffing rotations in offices to maintain physical distancing expectations.

- Flexibility is provided for employees who may need to work remotely (*e.g.*, individuals who identify themselves or immediate family members to be at high risk as defined by the CDC). Supervisors should work with employees to explore options to allow them to work remotely.
- Clinical faculty and staff are working in ETSU Health locations that remain open to provide patient care. Decisions about opening or closing ETSU Health clinical locations should be made in conjunction with the Vice President for Clinical Affairs.
- Offices open with options for extended hours to provide flexibility for service and optional staffing rotations.
- Student APS workers, Federal Work Study (FWS) workers, and Regular Work Study (RWS) recipients working.

#### Travel

- Outgoing university-related domestic travel is suspended including travel for participation in conferences, symposia, and other events. Travel by vehicle within the region (typically covered by blanket travel authorizations) for reaching ETSU sites is permitted. Other regional travel, which may include local visits to donors by advancement staff or university officials required to attend state meetings in Nashville or other locations, is permitted with prior authorization by the appropriate vice president. Limited exceptions for other domestic travel may be authorized by the appropriate vice president.
- All outgoing university-related international travel is suspended.
- All Study Abroad and other international programs for ETSU students are suspended.
- Recommendation for personal travel and international students traveling to ETSU is to follow the most current guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other appropriate federal agencies.

#### Academic Instruction

- Faculty will identify courses, competencies, or experiences that can only be acquired in a face-to-face setting. These courses, competencies and experiences will be the first priority for using classroom, teaching labs and other on-ground resources. Special physical distancing measures and occupancy limits must be used for these courses, competencies and experiences to minimize the spread of droplets.
- Faculty should consider adopting discipline specific guidelines provided by professional organizations, colleagues, or other experts that are relevant to the particular instructional setting.
- All other academic material will be offered in a hybrid format, to assure all students have an opportunity for both on-line and on-ground learning. Achieving a direct faculty-to-student interface, wherever possible, should be a priority, even if this cannot happen at every regularly scheduled class session.
- Every classroom will have limited physical occupancy in order to adhere to physical distancing requirements. Students must not be seated closer than six feet from another student. Attendance in class sessions must be adjusted to permit this physical distancing.

- Faculty should be flexible in their approach to using the limited classroom space in a way that works best for the specific course. For example, one approach is to provide all course lectures via D2L with classroom sessions reserved for in-depth discussion of material for smaller groups of students.
- Because of the occupancy limits, not all students may be able to attend every course session. Each course should have a plan for an equitable rotation schedule for students desiring to attend face-to-face sessions.
- Many classrooms do not have the ability to provide high-quality, real-time broadcast of live classroom activities to students in remote settings using Zoom. Thus, each course should plan for providing students not in class with materials asynchronously. For example, lecture capture recordings of the class session can be posted to D2L.
- Classroom exit strategies are employed for all classrooms with faculty dismissing sections of the classroom in phases during the last 5 minutes of scheduled class period.
- Classroom entrance strategies include students wiping down their desk as they enter the classroom with provided sanitizing wipe.
- Laboratory and on campus experiential courses are permitted with physical distancing and other sanitation measures.
- Department Chairs and College Deans should work with faculty to set common expectations across the department and college to address the limitations imposed by physical distancing and remote instruction.
- Experiential learning in the community possible on a program by program basis in partnership with community sites with approval by the college dean (clinical rotations, internships, externships, service learning).
- The Testing Center in the Sherrod Library is open and able to provide exam services with physical distancing parameters.
- University School must operate within the guidelines of its pandemic operations plan.

#### Research

- Laboratory and field research activities permitted.
- Graduate and undergraduate students are permitted to participate in research activities.
- Student or faculty research projects requiring access to community sites including local schools, health facilities or other comparable sites may face additional restrictions, including a limit on the number of ETSU personnel allowed to enter the campus or clinic. The department or college may need to prioritize projects that require such access.
- All lab personnel should wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including masks (need not be medical masks, any face covering (double-ply) would suffice), reusable eye protection and gloves while working in the labs. Individuals working at off-campus field sites should wear PPE appropriate for working conditions and practice physical distancing.

- Physical distancing should be practiced as much as possible; hand washing and other hygienic practices implemented as appropriate.
- It is recommended that research lab meetings be conducted with physical distancing measures in place, preferably via zoom, to limit interactions.
- COVID-19 research studies are permitted proceed with requirements for PPE use by investigators and subjects.
- Other research procedures involving person-to-person interaction are permitted with the requirement of appropriate PPE use by the investigator and subjects.
- Specific guidelines and detailed information about research activities, operations, awards, and IRB are provided on the ORSPA website.

#### Athletics

- As detailed in the Department of Athletics' operations plan, team activities including meetings, strength and conditioning sessions, and practices may occur on a modified schedule in accordance with guidelines issued by the NCAA and Southern Conference.
- Any event that would include spectators requires an event safety plan approved prior to the event.

#### Residence Halls and Dining Services

- Residence halls occupied with significant efforts to limit face-to-face exposure according to the Residence Life operations plan.
- Safety plan is used for move-in period to facilitate physical distancing.
- Dining hall open with other expanded dining areas available in the Culp Center to permit maintenance of social distancing.
- Dining hall limits self-serve options for patrons.
- Grab and go meal options are available.
- Isolation plans in place for students who test positive or are in quarantine because of exposure.

#### Student Life and Campus Services

- Student support services are encouraged to be provided via remote connection, to the extent possible, including tutoring, Disability Services, academic advising, Financial Aid, and the Counseling Center.
- Sherrod Library is open to faculty, staff, and students with physical distancing measures in place. All individuals are encouraged to use services and collections available online.
- Culp Center open with physical distancing measures in place.
- Basler Center for Physical Activity/CPA open with limited operations and physical distancing and enhanced sanitation measures in place.
- Intramural Activities and Club Sports offering modified programs with physical distancing measures in place.
- Farmer's Market operating with physical distancing measures in place.
- BucShot operating with reduced riding capacity and physical distancing measures in place.

- Affiliated student organizations must adhere to stage 3 parameters for both on and off campus functions.
- Student organization tents may be allowed on campus with physical distancing measures in place.
- Childcare facilities operating on a limited basis to adhere to physical distancing and other safety measures.

#### Visitors to Campus

- Large university events with more than 50 people would require an event safety plan with prior approval needed.
- Festivals, camps, and conferences operate on a limited basis providing for physical distancing and limited enrollment. Organizers must present a safety plan for approval.

#### Safety, Health, and Security

- All individuals must use appropriate face coverings on campus when around others.
- Heightened cleaning of academic spaces and other public spaces.
- Avoid holding large meetings or social gatherings. While university events with greater than 50 people may be held with approved event safety plans, individuals should refrain from routinely holding large meetings or social gatherings up to that limit if such activities can be facilitated using Zoom or other technology.
- Use Zoom to facilitate meetings and remote services employees and students.
- Crowd control and waiting line measures in place to promote physical distancing (plexiglass at select service windows, spaced marks on floors).
- University Health Center open with telehealth appointments available.
- Clinical faculty and staff working with patients should follow specific protocols and procedures provided by ETSU Health clinical leadership.

#### **Stage 3 Considerations**

- Transitioning from Stage 2 to Stage 3 would presumably coincide with the start of an academic term. This decision would need to be announced many weeks prior to the start of the academic term.
- Departments and units should be mindful of the need for planning for continuity of services should faculty or staff become ill.
- Limitations on travel and other demands imposed with instruction changes will likely impact faculty members' progression for promotion and/or tenure. Special consideration may be needed for how to address these issues.
- Availability of technology in classrooms to accommodate Zoom or Tegrity recording (or Tegrity replacement).
- Departments and faculty should consider how to best support faculty in the hybrid face-to-face and remote instruction environment.
- Consider graduate assistant availability to accommodate more lab sections with fewer students and/or tutorial sections.
- Altered trash collection may be needed on campus, especially in areas that may collect trash from the dining hall.

### **Stage 3 Needed Actions**

- The appropriate department chairs and deans must collaboratively develop the plans for the special physical distancing and other sanitation measures and occupancy limits that must be used in instructional spaces.
- Each department and unit office updates its plan to provide for decreased staffing density in order to accommodate physical distancing expectations.
- CPA staff develops operation guidelines addressing physical distancing and enhanced sanitation.
- Facilities Management creates a plan to assist departments and units with service-oriented spaces in the Sherrod Library, Culp Center, and select other campus locations in evaluating and installing plastic or plexiglass shields at select service windows or desks.
- Facilities Management creates a plan for increased custodial cleaning services in public spaces.
- Department of Athletics updates its operations plan with guidelines and procedures for team activities and student athlete expectations consistent with the university's operating stage in the context of NCAA and Southern Conference directives.
- Sherrod Library updates operating guidelines.
- Culp Center updates operating guidelines.
- Residence Life updates housing policies and contracts as necessary.
- Residence Life updates operating guidelines including isolation and quarantine plans.
- Residence Life creates or updates its resident move in plan to ensure physical distancing.
- Dining Services updates its operating guidelines.
- The event safety plan protocol must be updated to consider physical distancing requirements in review of plans for campus and athletic events.
- The Testing Center should develop operating guidelines to provide for physical distancing.
- The University School updates its pandemic operations plan.
- A communication plan is coordinated through University Relations on how the university is transitioning to this stage.

### **Stage 4 – The New Normal**

#### **Parameters, Considerations, and Needed Actions**

(Future plan)

#### **Stage 4 Parameters**

##### Employees and Offices

- Employees working on campus, to the extent appropriate.
- Flexibility is provided for employees who need to remotely work (at risk individuals).
- Clinical faculty and staff are working in ETSU Health locations that remain open to provide patient care.

- Offices open.
- Student APS workers, Federal Work Study (FWS) workers, and Regular Work Study (RWS) recipients working.

#### Travel

- Outgoing university-related domestic travel is permitted.
- Outgoing university-related international travel is permitted.
- Study Abroad and other international programs for ETSU students are permitted.
- Recommendation for personal travel and international students traveling to ETSU is to follow the most current guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other appropriate authorities.

#### Academic Instruction

- On campus face to face instruction with select physical distancing parameters possible.
- Laboratory and on campus experiential courses permitted.
- Specific limitations for theater, chorale, music, and voice instruction courses.
- Laboratory and on campus experiential courses permitted.
- Experiential learning permitted in the community with select limitations that may be imposed at the college level.
- Significant reconsideration of the “absentee” policy needs to be undertaken to assure that students can miss class, and still obtain the needed course content, during times of documentable illness.
- University School permitted to open within the guidelines of their pandemic operations plan.

#### Research

- Laboratory and field research activities permitted.
- Graduate and undergraduate students are permitted to participate in research activities.
- Student or faculty research projects requiring access to community sites including local schools, health facilities or other comparable sites may face additional restrictions, including a limit on the number of ETSU personnel allowed to enter the campus or clinic. The department or college may need to prioritize projects that require such access.
- Other research procedures involving person-to-person interaction are permitted with the requirement of PPE use by the investigator and subjects.
- Specific guidelines and detailed information about research activities, operations, awards, and IRB are provided on the ORSPA website.

#### Athletics

- As detailed in the Department of Athletics’ operations plan, team activities including meetings and practices may occur on a modified schedule in accordance with guidelines issued by the NCAA and Southern Conference.
- Any event that would include spectators would require an event safety plan with prior approval needed.

#### Residence Halls and Dining Services

- Residence halls occupied.
- Dining hall open.
- Dining hall limits self-serve options for patrons.

#### Student Life and Campus Services

- Student support services are encouraged to be available via remote connection including tutoring, Disability Services, academic advising, Financial Aid, and the Counseling Center.
- Sherrod Library open with physical distancing measures in place. Patrons encouraged to use services and collections available online.
- Culp Center open with physical distancing measures in place.
- Basler Center for Physical Activity/CPA open with appropriate physical distancing
- Intramural activities permitted; some limitations possible.
- Child Study Center open.
- Little Bucs open.

#### Visitors to Campus

- Large university events permitted with potential for select physical distancing measures.
- Festivals, camps, and conferences operating.

#### Safety, Health, and Security

- Potential for modified crowd control and waiting line measures in place to promote physical distancing (plexiglass at select service windows, spaced marks on floors)
- University Health Center open with telehealth appointments available.
- Clinical faculty and staff working with patients should follow specific protocols and procedures provided by ETSU Health clinical leadership.

### **Stage 4 Considerations**

- Use experiences from Stage 2 and Stage 3 operations to guide any necessary adjustments for Stage 4.

### **Stage 4 Needed Actions**

- Guidelines should be developed for vetting and approving select Study Abroad and other international programs for ETSU students.
- Create any needed physical distancing parameters for academic instruction based on experiences from Stage 3 (large classes, laboratories, performance).
- Modify physical distancing parameters for service areas.

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## Transitioning Between Stages

University leadership should make decisions to move “forward” or “backward” between operating stages based on available outcomes and public health data. Decisions should be made in collaboration with THEC, the Health Department, Ballad Health, and local city and county officials. Factors used to inform these decisions include:

- Data and guidance from the Tennessee Department of Health
- Data and guidance from experts with ETSU Health and the region
- Trajectory (upward or downward) of COVID-like syndromic cases reported
- Trajectory (upward or downward) of documented COVID-19 cases
- Changes in the severity of SARS CoV-2-related disease
- The state and local transmission rate
- Local hospitals’ capacity to handle case loads
- Testing availability
- Cases reported on campus
- Community information from local governments and school systems
- Mandates or parameters from THEC and other appropriate authorities
- Federal or state directives, guidelines, or executive orders
- Availability of cleaning supplies and PPE for use on campus.

There are caveats for shifting from one stage to another, mainly related to providing an appropriate amount of time to plan for the transition. Shifting to a lower numbered stage from a higher numbered stage could likely occur more quickly. However, planning to shift from Stage 2 to Stage 3, for example, requires a much longer advanced notice as Stage 3 includes occupancy of residence halls. Timing the implementation of that transition would likely fall at the start of a semester or term.

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## Safety and Health Measures

The university will continue to promote the safety and health measures outlined by the CDC, Tennessee Department of Health, and other appropriate authorities. As part its demonstrated advocacy for campus health and safety, the university must communicate broadly about the importance of individuals’ health and safety, emphasizing the critical services and resources available to employees and students that promote and support physical and mental health.

### Physical Distancing and Face Coverings

Central to ensuring health and safety is the requirement that individuals wear appropriate face coverings on campus, adhere to physical distancing measures, and engage in appropriate sanitation activities. Based on national recommendations, the current standard of 6 feet of distancing between individuals should be maintained as much as possible. Physical distancing is

especially important for times when individuals are sitting or standing in an area for longer periods of time. Thus, staffing plans for work areas should take this distance measure into account. Additionally, the classroom physical distancing guidelines outlined in Stage 3 parameters are based on the 6 feet distance. All faculty, staff, students, and visitors should wear an appropriate face covering on campus at all times unless physically isolated (*e.g.*, inside an individual office or residence hall room). Physical distancing alone without face coverings is not sufficient. Individuals will be expected to provide their own face covering, although the university may be able to provide some masks based on availability. The Health Department is providing an appropriate face covering to an individual at each of its locations.

### **Testing and Contact Tracing**

According to local public health officials, it is anticipated that COVID-19 testing for symptomatic individuals remain widely available. Individuals who have questions about testing or believe they need to be tested should contact the University Health Center. The Health Department is responsible for providing contact tracing for every person who tests positive for COVID-19. The university may be asked to provide information to help Health Department officials as they conduct contact tracing (*e.g.*, providing class enrollment information), however it is anticipated that the university will not otherwise be responsible for contact tracing and notification. As noted in the Individual Responsibility section of this document, employees and students who are diagnosed with a confirmed case of COVID-19 should notify the university through a specified process. This is to ensure that any additional cleaning or safety measures are taken into consideration. It also provides needed information about cases on campus that can be used in making decisions about campus operations.

As testing resources allow, the potential exists for expanded testing of all members of the ETSU campus community, including those without symptoms. Widespread testing of individuals would provide better surveillance capability to more quickly isolate positive cases and quarantine those exposed to positive cases. For example, the university should consider testing all students as they move into the residence halls. The ability to respond swiftly to positive cases provides the best opportunity to limit spread of the virus. Expanded testing could occur at other times on the recommendation of health care leaders.

### **Health Care Services**

The university will continue to provide robust health care services through its clinical operations of ETSU Health including the University Health Center serving students, faculty and staff from its Nicks Hall location on campus. The University Health Center provides options for both in-person care and telehealth visits. Additionally, the area's full complement of ETSU Health practice locations are also available.

When a vaccine becomes available, the University Health Center in partnership with the Health Department, ETSU Health, and Ballard Health will create plans for providing vaccinations to the ETSU community.

## **Safety Actions**

The university will continue to promote healthy hygiene practices, including frequent reminders about hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes, and using appropriate face coverings. Individuals should maintain physical distancing practices. Employees and students should stay home if they are sick or if they have been exposed to a documented or highly suspected case of COVID-19. Signs promoting these everyday protective measures should be widely distributed across campus. Central to promoting these practices should be an emphasis on each individual's responsibility for the health of the campus and community. The University should re-evaluate practices and policies that might discourage a faculty, staff or student from self-isolating when they feel they may have a communicable disease. As stages provide for more employees on campus and for academic instruction on campus, offices and units should work collaboratively to meet physical distancing expectations. Unit or department level plans should complement the university plans outlined in this document. Specific service units may choose to have plans that involve daily self-assessments and temperature checks, but it is not anticipated this will be a widely adopted procedure. Example service units include Public Safety and ETSU Health faculty and staff in a clinical environment.

The university should provide resources that promotes personal hygiene and appropriate sanitation. In the context of a situation of scarce resources, the university should explore how best to procure and provide items like masks, tissues, alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 60 percent alcohol, disinfectants, and disposable towels for individuals to clean their work surfaces or desks in classrooms. Employees should be discouraged from using other workers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible. Public spaces with chairs and other seating should be rearranged or altered, to the extent possible, to discourage gathering of individuals. Plexiglass shields or guards should be considered for service window or service desk locations. In select locations crowd control and waiting line measures should be installed to promote physical distancing (signs, barriers, spaced marks on floors to show 6 feet of physical distancing). Facilities should maintain regular housekeeping practices of public spaces, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces, equipment, and other elements of the campus environment. Facilities should coordinate PPE use for certain facilities employees for use in their jobs. Using the CDC guidelines, additional plans should be formulated for cleaning spaces on campus identified after an individual tests positive for COVID-19.

## **People at Higher Risk for Severe Illness**

The university should provide flexibility for employees and students who may need to continue working and learning from a remote environment because of being at higher risk for severe illness. A review and update of employment and attendance policies should occur to provide a standard approach to offering flexibility in the work and classroom environments while ensuring continued compliance with relevant ADA, ADEA, and other regulations. Currently the CDC notes the following individuals are at high risk for severe illness with COVID-19:

- People 65 years and older
- People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility
- People of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, including:

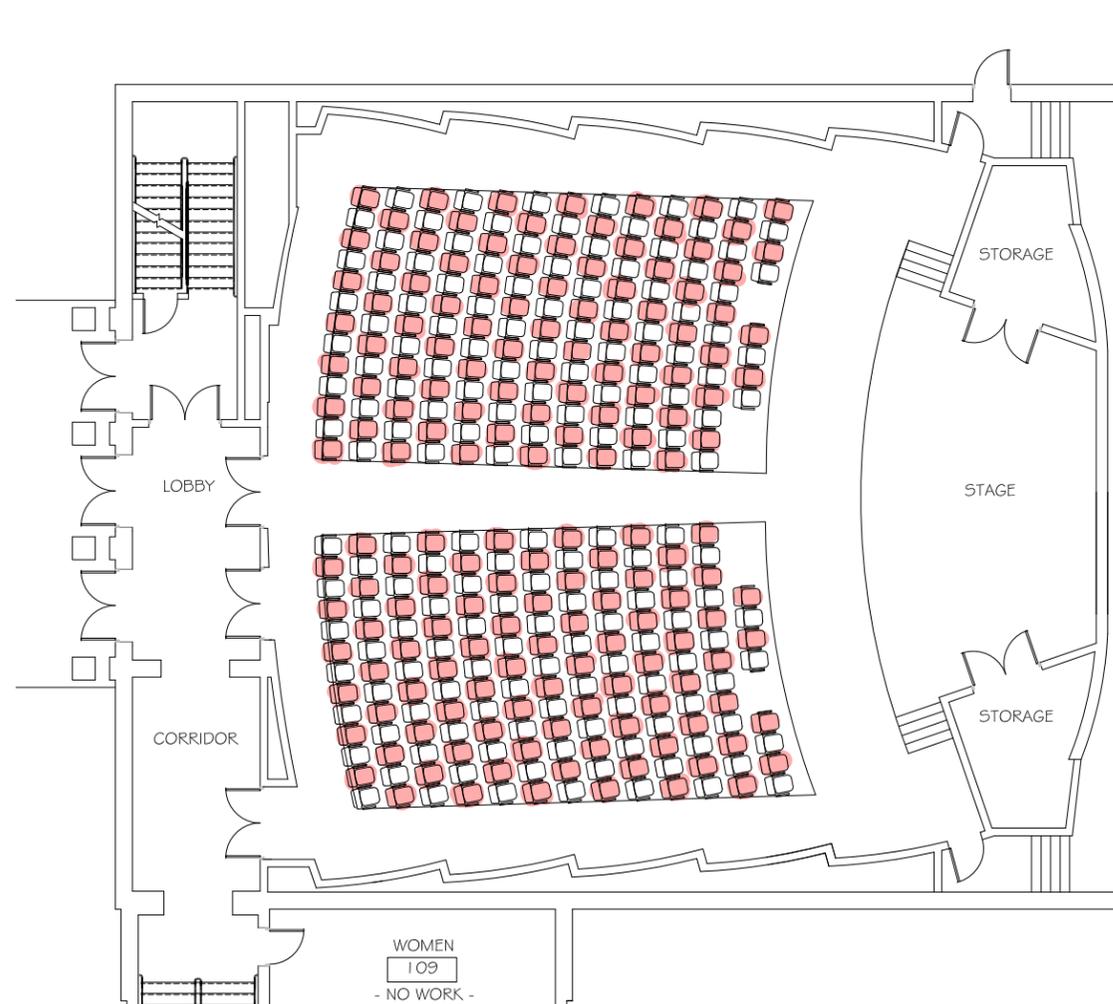
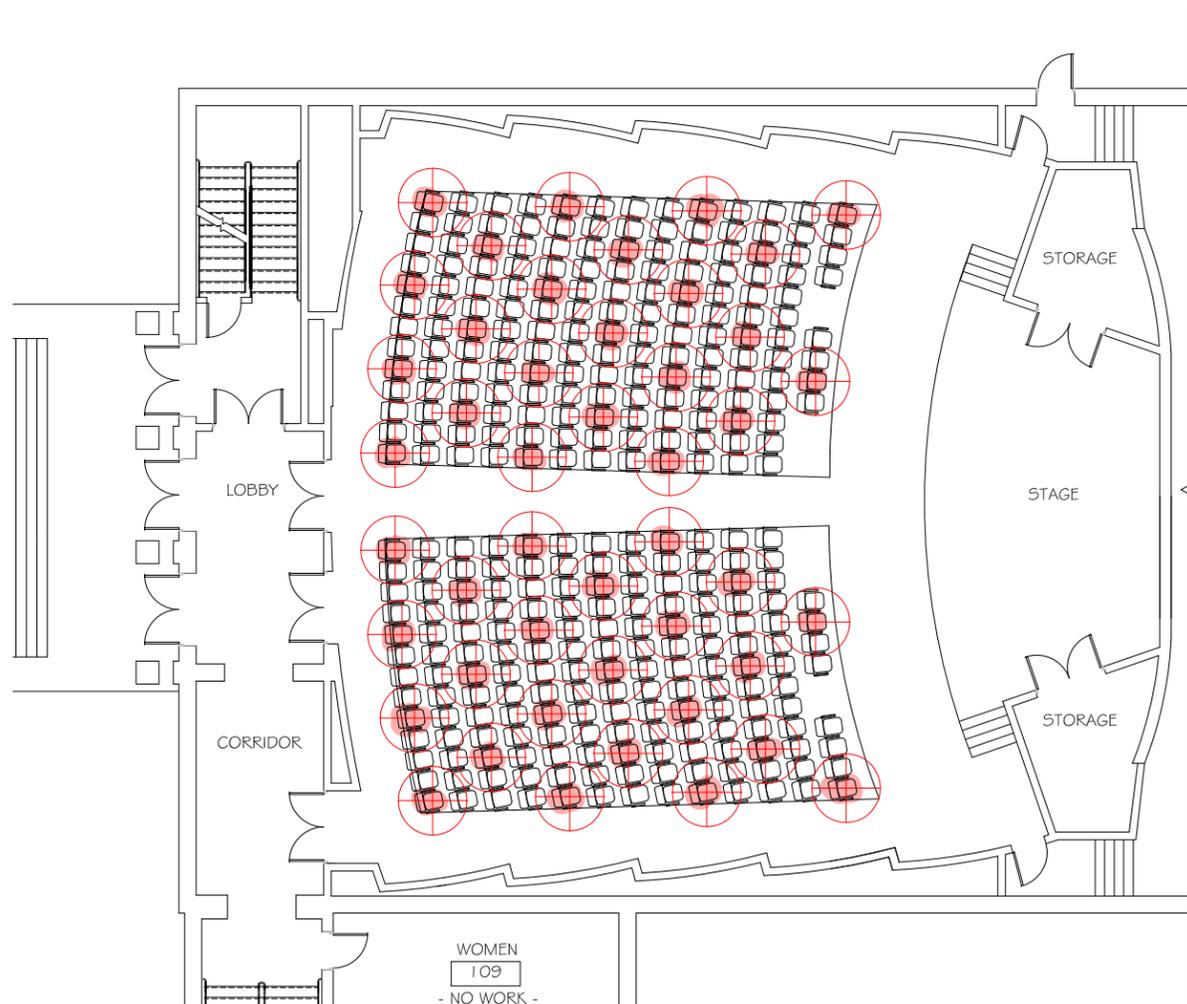
- People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- People who have serious heart conditions
- People who are immunocompromised (Many conditions can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medications)
- People with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher)
- People with diabetes
- People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
- People with liver disease.

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## **Appendix**

Diagrams of example campus instructional space showing physical distancing.

- TOTAL SEAT COUNT: 328 SEATS
- TOTAL APPROXIMATE SQUARE FOOTAGE: 3,500 SF
- REDUCED SEAT COUNT IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL DISTANCING: 46 SEATS
- OCCUPANCY REDUCED TO: 14% OF TOTAL ENFORCING THE STRICTEST INTERPRETATION OF THE CDC GUIDELINES OF 6' SOCIAL DISTANCING
- 50% OCCUPANCY MAY NOT MEET THE CDC GUIDELINES IN SOME CASES



**BROWN HALL 112 : STRICTEST INTERPRETATION PLAN**  
SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"



**BROWN HALL 112 : 50% OCCUPANCY**  
SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"



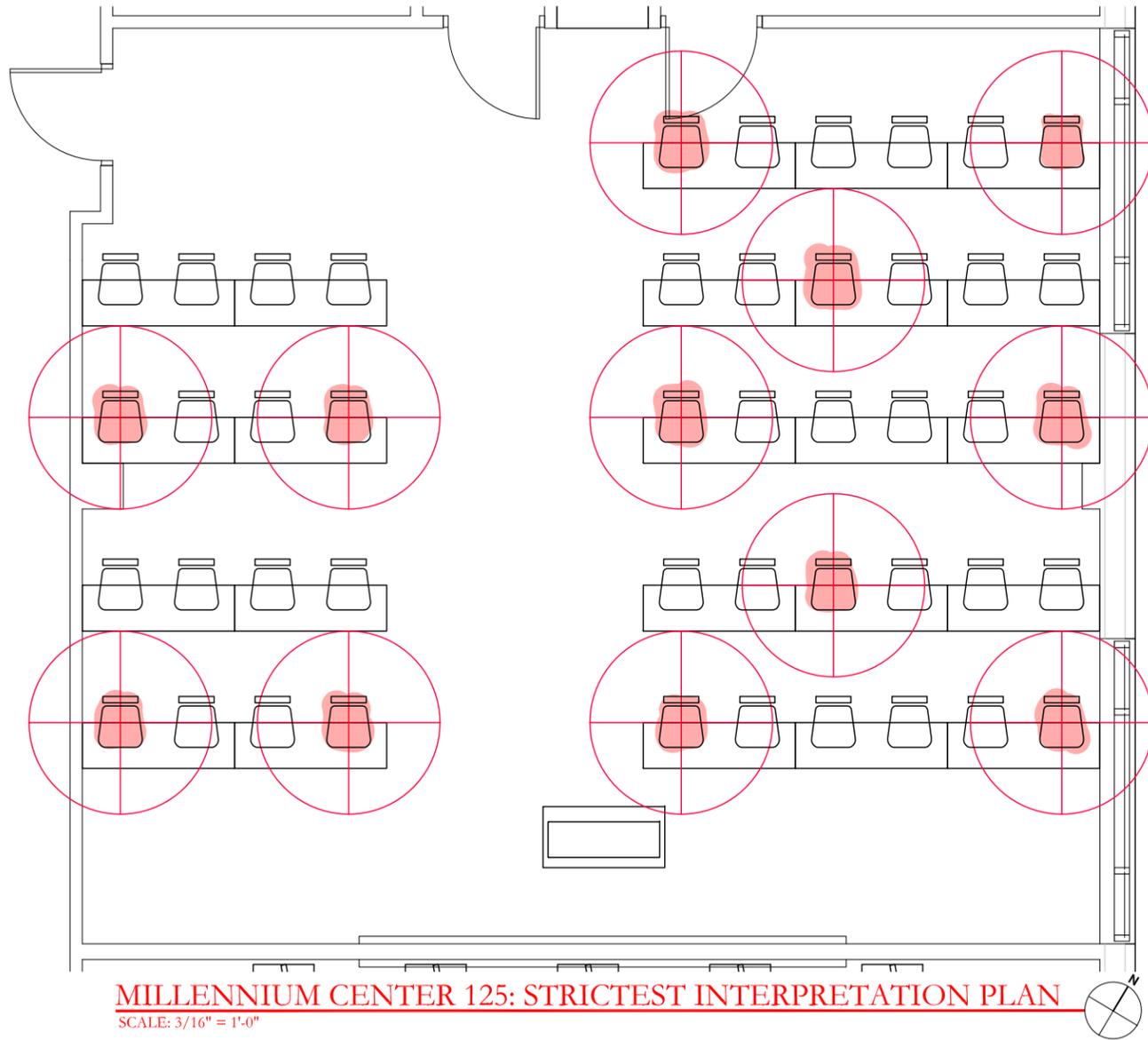
911 Address: 173 SHERROD DR
Total BUILDING Square Footage: 160,468
Total FLOOR Square Footage: 32,117

DATE: 05/14/20	REVISIONS:
DRAWN BY: H. RAYMOND	DATE DESCRIPTION
SCALE: As Shown	
APPROVED BY (DEPT):	

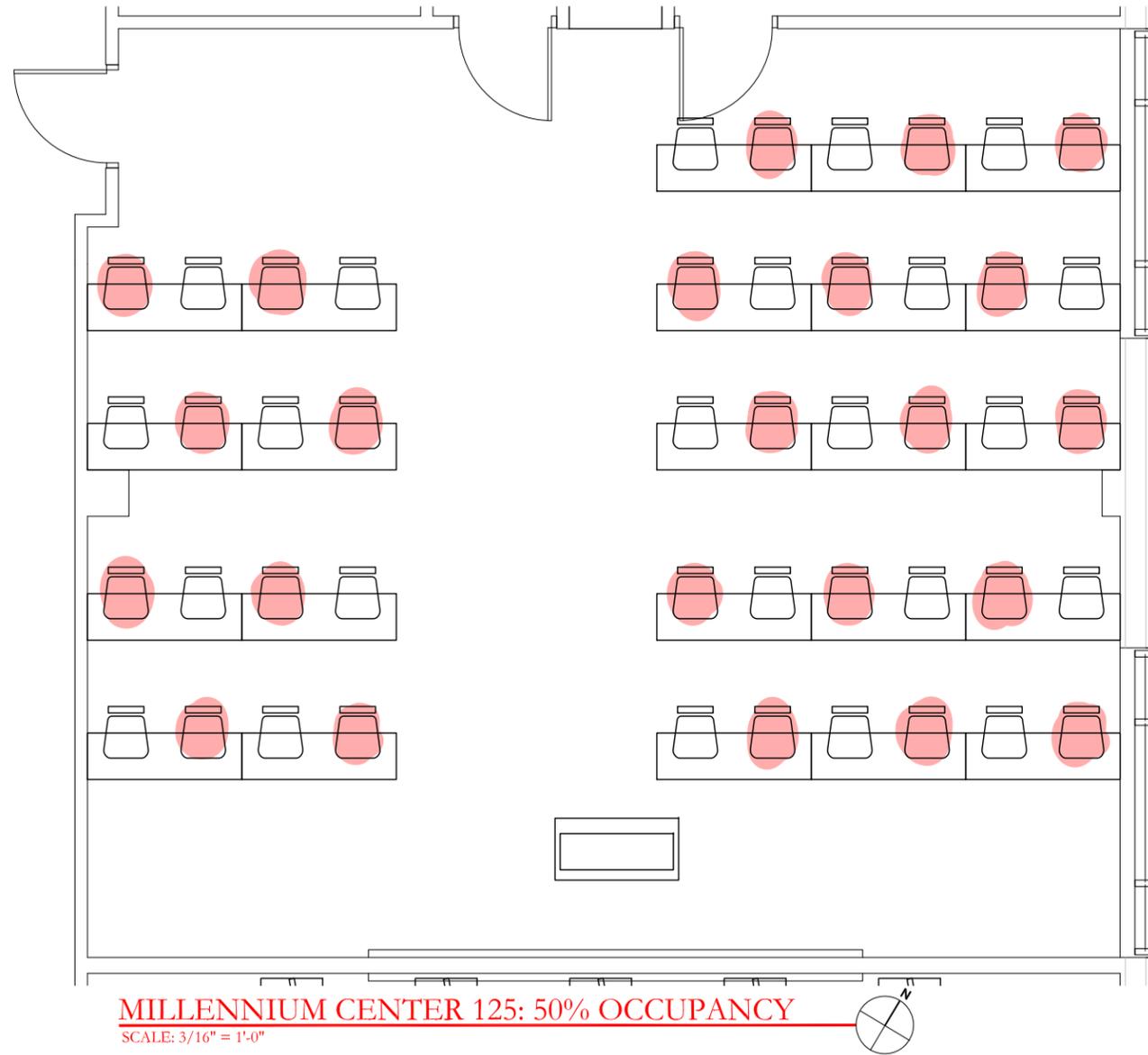
PRELIMINARY DRAWING NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

- TOTAL SEAT COUNT: 23 SEATS
- TOTAL APPROXIMATE SQUARE FOOTAGE: 994 SF
- REDUCED SEAT COUNT IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL DISTANCING: 12 SEATS
- OCCUPANCY REDUCED TO: 52% OF TOTAL ENFORCING THE STRICTEST INTERPRETATION OF THE CDC GUIDELINES OF 6' SOCIAL DISTANCING
- 50% OCCUPANCY MAY NOT MEET THE CDC GUIDELINES IN SOME CASES

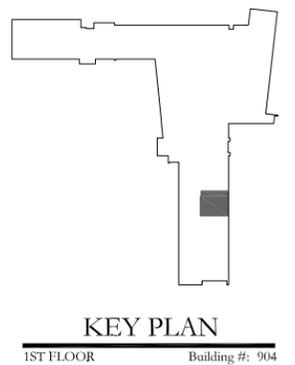
PLEASE NOTE: MOVING TABLES AND CHAIRS COULD INCREASE SEATING COUNT WHILE IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL DISTANCING



**MILLENNIUM CENTER 125: STRICTEST INTERPRETATION PLAN**  
SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"



**MILLENNIUM CENTER 125: 50% OCCUPANCY**  
SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"



**KEY PLAN**  
1ST FLOOR Building #: 904

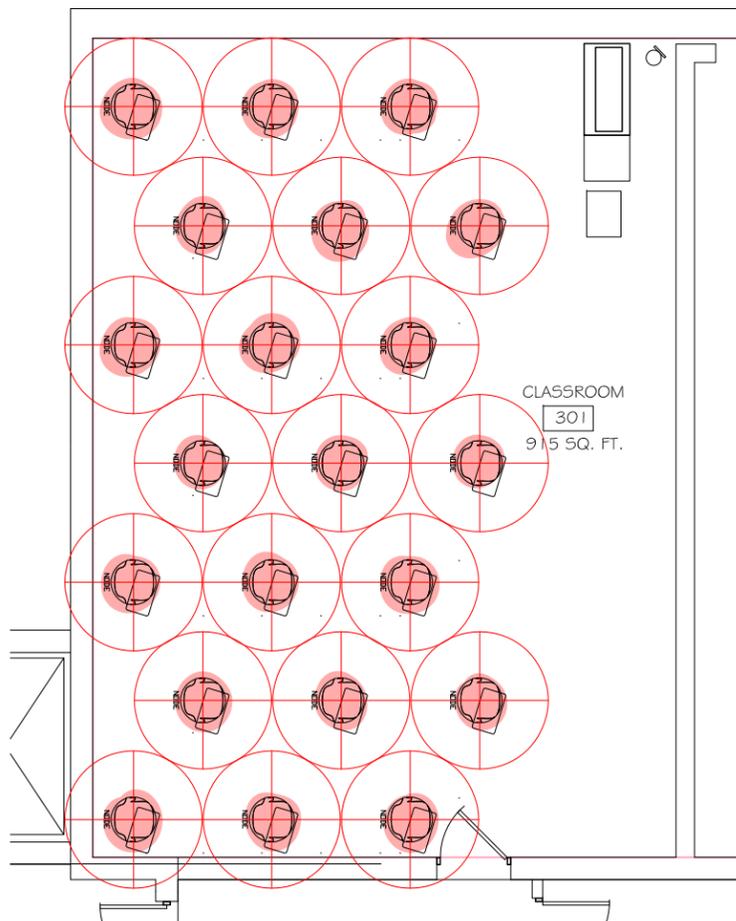
PRELIMINARY DRAWING NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

911 Address: 2001 MILLENNIUM PL
Total BUILDING Square Footage: 75,137
Total FLOOR Square Footage: 37,555

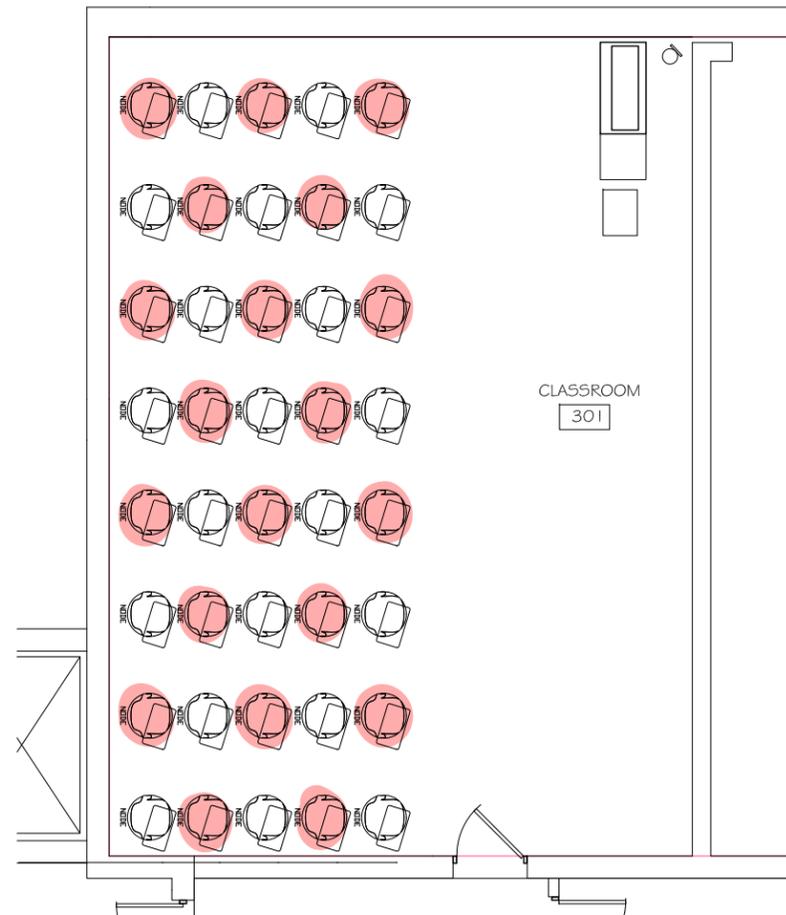
DATE: 05/14/20	REVISIONS:
DRAWN BY: H. RAYMOND	DATE DESCRIPTION
SCALE: As Shown	---
APPROVED BY (DEPT):	---
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- TOTAL SEAT COUNT: 40 SEATS
- TOTAL APPROXIMATE SQUARE FOOTAGE: 915 SF
- REDUCED SEAT COUNT IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL DISTANCING: 21 SEATS
- OCCUPANCY REDUCED TO: 52% OF TOTAL ENFORCING THE STRICTEST INTERPRETATION OF THE CDC GUIDELINES OF 6' SOCIAL DISTANCING
- 50% OCCUPANCY MAY NOT MEET THE CDC GUIDELINES IN SOME CASES

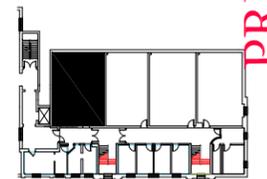
PLEASE NOTES: THE INDIVIDUAL DESKS WOULD NEED TO BE ARRANGED IN THE RECOMMENDED LAYOUT IN ORDER TO MEET THE 6' GUIDELINE. THERE COULD BE A POTNTIAL ISSUE OF KEEPING THE DESKS IN THE EXACT LOCATION ONCE PLACED.



**BURLESON 301: STRICTEST INTERPRETATION PLAN**  
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



**BURLESON 301: 50% OCCUPANCY**  
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



KEY PLAN  
3RD FLOOR Building #: 14

911 Address: 194 SHERROD DR
Total BUILDING Square Footage: 24,296 SF
Total FLOOR Square Footage: 6,135 SF

PRELIMINARY DRAWING NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

	<b>EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY</b> Department of Facilities Office of Planning, Design and Construction	DATE: 05/14/20 DRAWN BY: H. RAYMOND SCALE: As Shown APPROVED BY (DEPT):	<b>REVISIONS:</b> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>DATE</th> <th>DESCRIPTION</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>---</td><td>---</td></tr> <tr><td>---</td><td>---</td></tr> <tr><td>---</td><td>---</td></tr> <tr><td>---</td><td>---</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	DATE	DESCRIPTION	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
	DATE	DESCRIPTION											
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<b>CLASSROOM WITH INDIVIDUAL DESKS</b>													
BURLESON HALL 301													
RENOVATION FOR <b>N/A</b>													
PROJECT #: N/A		SHEET: <b>A103</b> SHEET: 3 of 4											

- TOTAL SEAT COUNT: 47 SEATS
- TOTAL APPROXIMATE SQUARE FOOTAGE: 1,178 SF
- REDUCED SEAT COUNT IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL DISTANCING: 13 SEATS
- OCCUPANCY REDUCED TO: 27% OF TOTAL ENFORCING THE STRICTEST INTERPRETATION OF THE CDC GUIDELINES OF 6' SOCIAL DISTANCING
- 50% OCCUPANCY MAY NOT MEET THE CDC GUIDELINES IN SOME CASES

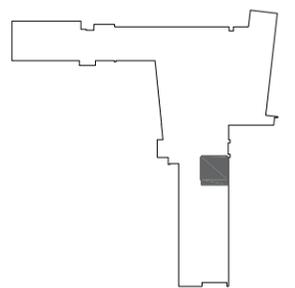
PLEASE NOTE: MOVING TABLES AND CHAIRS COULD INCREASE SEATING COUNT WHILE IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL DISTANCING



**MILLENNIUM CENTER 130: STRICTEST INTERPRETATION PLAN**  
SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"



**MILLENNIUM CENTER 130: 50% OCCUPANCY**  
SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"



**KEY PLAN**  
1ST FLOOR Building #: 904

PRELIMINARY DRAWING NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

911 Address: 2001 MILLENNIUM PL
Total BUILDING Square Footage: 75,137
Total FLOOR Square Footage: 37,555

DATE: 05/14/20	REVISIONS:
DRAWN BY: H. RAYMOND	DATE DESCRIPTION
SCALE: As Shown	---
APPROVED BY (DEPT):	---
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