Fall 2020 Health and Safety FAQs for International Students: Quarantining, COVID Testing and Other Important Issues

We address some frequently asked questions below in hopes of alleviating some concerns you may have. If you need additional information, or have questions that are not answered below, please visit UAlbany’s COVID-19 website, Health and Safety section (https://www.albany.edu/covid-19/planning-fall-2020/health-safety) and view the recording of the July 27th ISSS Zoom presentation on Health and Safety for Fall 2020 sent to international students by email on the same day. Also, watch for upcoming Q&A Zoom forums announced on ISSS’ Friday Newsletter.

Q: If I will not be coming from one of the states designated under the NY Governor’s Travel Advisory or from countries designated as high risk countries by the CDC am I required to self-isolate for 14 days prior to arriving on campus?
A: According to the University’s COVID-19 website, students who are not required to fulfill a mandatory quarantine should self-quarantine at their home 14 days before arriving on campus, if possible.

Q: I will arrive from a country which has a travel restriction (China, Iran, Brazil, Schengen Region, UK or Ireland), and therefore am subject to a mandatory quarantine. May I complete my mandatory quarantine in my apartment off-campus?
A: Most likely, but be aware of two issues. First, you will need to arrive with enough time to quarantine for 14 days prior to the date you need to be on-campus for class or any other reason. Second, visit the following website for instructions on how to quarantine - https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/coronavirus-social-distancing-and-self-quarantine.

Q: I have been in Albany for several months. Will I need to take the mandatory COVID-19 test? If so, when?
A: Yes. Schedule your test at least two weeks before the start of classes, which is August 24th, 2020. If you will be a fully remote student who will not come on campus during Fall 2020 at all for any reason, please contact the Dean of Students Office at dos@albany.edu to request a waiver.

Q: Where can I get a COVID-19 PCR and/or antigen test in New York State?
A: All students, including those currently living in the Albany area, can visit the New York State Department of Health’s website to find a nearby test site. Students are responsible for arranging for testing, some of which are drive-thru. Alternatively, if you are able to obtain a test meeting the specifications while still in your home country, you can do that.

Q: I will be taking a fully remote course load and will be living off-campus during the Fall 2020 semester. Do I still need to take the mandatory COVID-19 test?
A: If a student plans to travel to campus at any time, the student will be required to submit proof of a negative result from a test performed within the 14 days prior to their arrival to UAlbany. Fully remote students can contact the Dean of Students Office at dos@albany.edu to speak with a staff member about their individual circumstances.

Q: Will the cost of the COVID-19 PCR or antigen test be covered by my international student health insurance?
A: In most cases, insurance will only cover the cost of the exam if it is recommended by a medical physician. If you are asymptomatic and/or not recommended by a medical physician, you should look into testing options which do not require insurance. These may include NYS funded free testing options, such as the UAlbany located drive-thru site, or some local testing sites at RiteAid and CVS. We recommend that you call the testing facility before going to ask if you need an appointment, and also to ask if insurance is required or if they offer free testing.

The health insurance plan for all international students becomes effective for the Fall 2020 semester on August 15th, 2020. Students who need to be tested before August 15th, 2020 must contact the International Insurance Coordinator, Henny Jong-Futerko, at intinsurance@albany.edu to request additional insurance coverage at a daily rate if they would like their international health insurance to become effective before August 15th, 2020. Students who are tested on or
after August 15th, 2020 do not need to request additional coverage in order for their international health insurance to cover the cost of COVID-19 PCR and/or antigen testing. Note: Students may be required to pay a $50 deductible for the insurance to cover the full cost of the test.