

# AU FORWARD

## THE PLAN FOR FALL 2020

---

June 16, 2020

# Overview

AU Forward, our overall approach for Fall 2020, is comprised of health and safety information, the format for instruction and campus life, and workforce guidance.

The health, safety, and well-being of our students, faculty, and staff is our priority and at the center of our decision-making. Based on current and anticipated conditions related to COVID-19 and the need for safety protocols, Fall 2020 will be different than a typical semester. It will feature as much face-to-face engagement as safely possible.

To provide safe and accessible educational opportunities, we will offer a residential campus experience with a blend of in-person and online classes and activities. This provides flexibility to navigate changing health and safety conditions and the ability to increase in-person opportunities over time as allowed by health guidelines.

More information is available on the [\*AU COVID-19 Resources webpage\*](#).

We will continue to closely monitor the evolving situation. Additional adjustments to our plan and operations may be needed based on updated guidance from the DC government, the American College Health Association (ACHA), and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

## Our Goals

- To protect the health and safety of the AU community and deliver a high-quality education to our students.
- To maximize the opportunities for students to learn and progress towards their degree through robust interactions with faculty and peers.
- To provide a residential experience as we prioritize health and safety.

# Summary – Fall 2020

- Follow the **health and safety procedures** outlined in the *AU Forward: Health and Safety Plan*, in accordance with local, state, and federal health guidance.
- Begin the fall semester **on schedule** on August 24 (WCL begins on August 21).
- Deliver classes through a **blended combination of face-to-face and online instruction** to foster students' access to interactive learning experiences and ensure health and safety.
- Offer a **residential experience** to first-year students who desire to be on campus and some sophomore students as space permits. Provide additional off-campus housing options to sophomores, juniors, seniors, and graduate students.
- Operate AU residence halls at reduced capacity (2,305 beds) to reduce density, with **students living in single rooms**.
- **Build community** through curricular and co-curricular opportunities for students to enhance their skill sets, connect to Washington, DC, build relationships, and explore opportunities for shared experiences.
- **Reimagine Fall Break** (October 9-11) as a series of career readiness and skills development programs.
- Complete on-campus instruction and activities at **Thanksgiving break (November 25-29)**. Students living on campus will return home to avoid additional travel costs and reduce exposure and community spread. All classes and final exams will be completed remotely.



**HEALTH & SAFETY  
OF OUR  
COMMUNITY**



**EDUCATION  
& RESEARCH  
MISSION**

# Health and Safety

AU will follow Centers for Disease Control (CDC), DC government/Department of Health, and American College Health Association (ACHA) guidelines.

All community members will participate in mandatory health and safety training.

Physical distancing (6 feet of space) between individuals is required for academic and non-academic activities. Occupancy requirements in buildings will be updated to meet physical distancing requirements. Procedures for larger gatherings/major events must follow DC reopening guidelines.

Non-medical face coverings (face masks) will be required for all community members at all times on campus, except while alone in residence hall rooms or private offices..

The university will have reusable masks available upon request. Other PPE will be provided for designated staff with jobs/responsibilities that do not permit appropriate physical distancing.

Read more in the [\*AU Forward: Health and Safety Plan\*](#) on the COVID-19 Resources webpage.

## Health and Safety protocols are in effect across campus:

- Residence halls
- Classrooms and labs
- Common areas
- Dining facilities
- Event/meeting spaces
- Bender Library
- Offices (individual/shared)
- Outdoor spaces
- Restrooms
- Elevators
- Shuttles and university vehicles
- Athletics, sports, and recreation facilities

# COVID-19 Testing and Contact Tracing

The Student Health Center will have testing capabilities for students. Testing protocols will be in accordance with health guidelines, symptomatic individuals will be tested, and voluntary tests will be available. Self-monitoring protocols will be instituted with an online questionnaire that community members must complete.

Symptomatic individuals must refrain from coming to work or classes. Testing should be conducted by the appropriate health care provider (students with the AU student health center; faculty/staff through their personal health care providers).

COVID-19 positive cases must be reported to university via a reporting mechanism that will be deployed for the fall semester.

Isolation will be mandated for anyone who tests positive and anyone deemed to be in close contact with a confirmed case. An isolation building has been designated for students residing on campus who test positive.

Contact tracing will be coordinated through the DC Department of Health.



# Cleaning of On-Campus Spaces

Increased cleaning of campus spaces will occur according to DC and CDC guidance. Routine services will be augmented with additional cleaning and disinfection activities in all buildings. There will be frequent cleaning of spaces with higher occupancy levels and work activity.

All occupied spaces will maintain HVAC system operation for maximum space occupancy. This allows for maximum fresh air supply, regardless of reduced occupancy or use.

Cleaning activities will consist of:

- Routine cleaning: waste removal, floor cleaning, and wipe-down of horizontal surfaces.
- Routine restroom cleaning: waste removal, cleaning and disinfection of floors, sinks, toilets, and urinals.
- Routine cleaning of dining areas/restaurants: cleaning of food preparation areas, service lines, and dining facilities.
- Enhanced cleaning: disinfection of high-touch surfaces with wipe-down of high-frequency touch points (e.g., door handles, light switches, elevator buttons, shared equipment control panels, etc.) using EPA-approved disinfectants.
- Enhanced disinfection: disinfection of horizontal work surfaces in classrooms and common areas using EPA-approved disinfectants.



# Classes and Instruction

Classes will be offered through a blended combination of face-to-face and online instruction (see descriptions at right). Students will have some face-to-face opportunities available.

Current scheduled class times will remain (even if the class is being taught online).

Students who cannot attend in person will have options for high quality online instruction and virtual community opportunities.

Schools/colleges/programs will identify courses prioritized for face-to-face instruction. Classes with 40-plus students will likely be online due to space constraints, with the possibility of face-to-face labs or smaller group sessions.

Faculty will receive extensive support for dynamic educational experiences, including CTRL workshops and instructional design resources.

Capstone experiences and all experiential learning opportunities are central to the plan, especially for seniors and graduate students.

The goal is to provide what students need, where they need it, and when they need it to gain knowledge, continue moving toward degree completion, and achieve their academic goals.

## Courses will occur across the following formats:

- Live online sessions with in-person class meetings every other week.
- Live online sessions with periodic in-person class meetings throughout the semester.
- Live online sessions only.
- Online only; recommended for students who cannot meet at a set class time.
- Live online sessions with a combination of in-person and live virtual lab sessions.
- Live online sessions with a combination of in-person and live virtual studio sessions.

# Classroom Capacity

Physical distancing requirements will significantly limit the amount of classroom capacity for face-to-face instruction. More than 100 of our classrooms will only be able to accommodate fewer than 10 people.

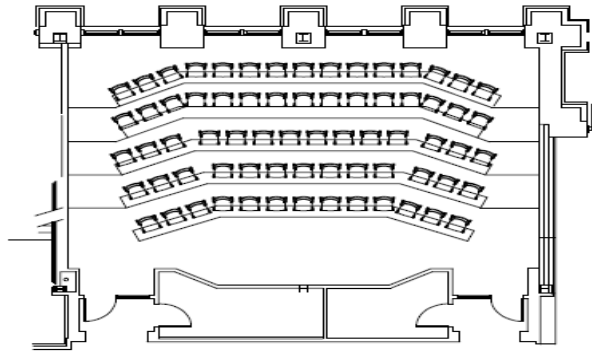
We will maintain 6 feet of separation per person in classrooms, work areas, and common spaces by physically moving/removing furniture, marking physical distance requirements with signage, and/or covering equipment.

**The following steps will be taken to augment class and student meeting space:**

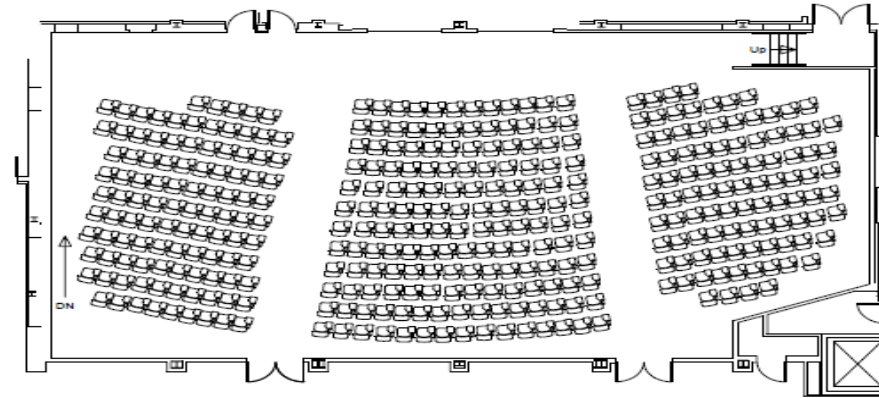
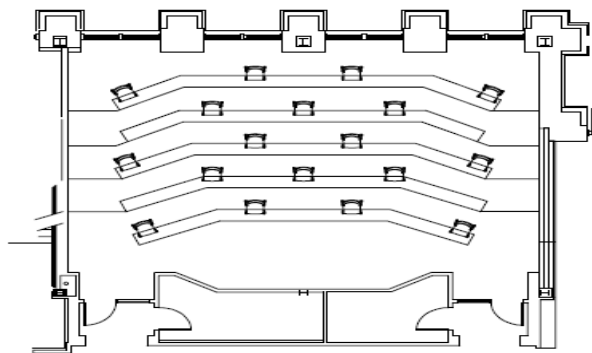
- Install new audio/visual technology in classrooms
- Conduct staff and faculty meetings online
- Utilize select event spaces
- Use rooms in Spring Valley Building (SVB) and 4200 Wisconsin Avenue



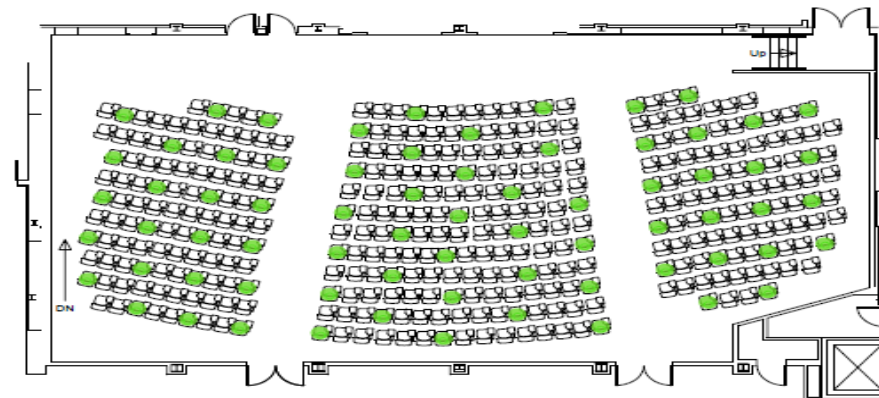
# Sample Classroom Capacity With Physical Distancing



KSB\*118  
Current Cap: 75  
Distanced Cap: 18



KRWN\*T01  
Current Cap: 348  
Distanced Cap: 70



# The Student Experience

Experiential learning and community is a hallmark of the AU education.

Working with students to conceptualize and implement community-building initiatives, we will deploy virtual and immersive experiences, utilize outdoor spaces, and create opportunities for student mentorship. Although we must modify our behavior, we will still have student organizations, select small events, speakers, and opportunities to create community and connections.

We will augment our curricular offering with a suite of career readiness and skill building workshops, courses, and guest speakers. This will include a Skills Development Institute for students to develop market-relevant skills.

Programs will feature alumni, staff, faculty, and friends of the university to provide a wide range of perspectives and learning opportunities.

We will leverage our partnership with Washington, DC, to bring the experience of the city to our community. This will include community-based learning, with special topics such as the 2020 US elections and research in a time of COVID-19.

## A New Kind of Fall Break

Fall Break (October 9-11) will be transformed into a series of symposiums, skill development workshops, and community engagement for students residing on campus, students residing in the DC region, and those engaged remotely from around the country and the world.

# Housing

For health and safety reasons, we will reduce density in our residence halls.

Anderson, Letts, Roper, Hughes, McDowell, and Leonard will feature 1 person per room and 12-16 residents per community bathroom (4 students assigned per fixture— toilet/shower/sink).

Centennial, Nebraska, Cassell, and East Campus will be utilized at 1, 2, 3, or 4 residents per bathroom (depending on the suite/apartment capacity).

Housing assignments will be prioritized for first-year students who wish to be on campus and a portion of the sophomore class.

AU has secured a limited number of off-campus housing locations for sophomores who previously secured on-campus housing and due to the limited capacity will need to relocate off campus.

For safety reasons, one residence hall will remain unoccupied for self-isolation of on-campus residential students who have a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19.



# Dining Services

To conform with physical distancing and safety protocols, on-campus dining services will be modified.

Packaged meals will be available. Take-away options and a mobile ordering system will be available for select retail food options.

Seating will be limited, and a table reservation system will be implemented for TDR.

Deep cleaning and strict safety measures will be implemented for all food service operations. Tables will be cleaned between guest seating, and sanitizer stations will be available to the entrance of each area.

Chartwells employees and managers will undergo temperature checks and will be required to wear face coverings at all times.

Plexiglass shields will be in place at all point of sale locations, pick up areas, and service areas.

Meal plans will begin on August 16.



# Community of Care

To support our entire community, the full spectrum of services will be available, though many will operate in modified approaches to conform with health and safety protocols.

Student services—including advising, the AU counseling center, the student health center, the Dean of Students’ office, academic support and access, and others—will be fully operational in accordance with health and safety standards.

We will have a focus on support for community members disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and the national climate, including mental health support.

Access to reliable internet and technology will be part of our overall commitment to learning.



# AU Workforce

AU is planning a phased return of faculty and staff to campus for the fall semester. To protect the health and safety of faculty, staff, and students, the way we work will differ significantly from the pre-COVID-19 period.

Departments will work with HR to classify faculty and staff into three groups based on university needs and job functions – 1) full presence required on campus; 2) partial presence on campus with telework; or 3) full telework. Faculty and staff will be notified of their status by the end of July.

To keep density low, faculty and staff returning to campus may have adjusted schedules and many will continue to telework much or all of the time in the initial phases. With classroom time/space limited due to physical distancing, nearly all faculty (unless they receive an accommodation/modification) will be expected to ensure their students benefit from periodic in-person, face-to-face sessions during the semester. Business meetings will continue to be conducted using videoconferencing tools.

This is an evolving process that will be updated based on health and operating conditions.

Read more in the [\*AU Forward: Moving to The Next Phase of How We Work\*](#) document on the COVID-19 Resources webpage.



Faculty and staff may request a COVID-19 reasonable accommodation due to a disability or medical condition, or request to work remotely because they are 65 years or older, or they have a household member who is immunocompromised. More information about the accommodation process for staff will be provided on June 17.

## Calendar/Key Dates

August 15-23:	All-American Welcome and Move In
August 21:	WCL fall classes begin
August 24:	First day of fall classes
October 9-11:	Fall Skills and Career Development Days
November 24:	Last day of on-campus (in-person) instruction and activities
November 25-29:	Thanksgiving break, AU closed
December 2:	WCL fall classes end
December 4:	Fall classes end (online)
December: 7-12	Final exams (conducted remotely)





AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

---

W A S H I N G T O N , D C