

## Fall 2020 Student Update

8/6/20

Greetings MCLA Students,

We are excited to see you on campus this fall! In this email, you will find details about residence areas, dining, and more. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and new state guidelines related to health and safety, our experience this fall will be different, but we are making every effort to keep the campus as safe as possible for in-person learning and on-campus living.

### Trailblazer Agreement

As a member of our community, we expect you to do your part to ensure your continued health and safety, as well as the health and safety of those around you.

To this end, all students are asked to abide by the health and safety guidelines MCLA has developed and sign an agreement to this effect. The Trailblazer Agreement will be sent to all students via email next week with the expectation that you will follow the link, read the agreement and sign off **prior to arrival on campus** either for move-in or for the first day of class if you live off campus. We ask you to remember that the opportunity to remain on campus to live and learn depends on our ability to control the spread of COVID-19, which is dependent upon all community members adhering to the guidelines set by MCLA and our local and state health agencies.

These guidelines include:

- Wear a face covering in public when outside your own room/home, including in instructional settings, in campus buildings, on campus grounds, and other public areas or as directed by the college or local/state health authorities;
- Monitor your own health daily; and to stay home when ill or running a fever;
- Wash your hands frequently or use hand sanitizer when washing is not possible;
- Take a COVID test when asked to do so by the college;
- Respond to any requests from contact tracers to help control the spread of the virus.

### Testing and Contact Tracing

MCLA has engaged with the Broad Institute for a comprehensive campus testing plan coordinated by our Health Services office. All resident students will be tested upon arrival and once a week for the first month of attendance. After that, we will switch to surveillance testing with 20-25% of our resident students tested on a randomized schedule. Information will be communicated with students in regard to specific time and other details.

Commuter students will also be tested through Health Services. These testing guidelines will follow MA Department of Public Health recommendations for symptomatic and asymptomatic

complaints. Individuals will be triaged and referred to on- or off-campus testing, as deemed medically necessary. Health Services will indicate specific days and times for commuter students as the semester gets underway.

Limited voluntary testing will be made available for faculty and staff who are physically present on campus for the cost of \$25 and Health Services will be releasing specific days and times for employee testing as the semester begins. MCLA will cover the cost of employee testing for those whom a test is deemed necessary through contact tracing practices.

In addition to coordination with the appropriate local public health officials, MCLA is utilizing the Guardian platform to assist in necessary contact tracing measures. Guardian is a case management system that MCLA uses for a multitude of purposes. This software has the capability for MCLA to log and track individuals related to COVID-19 who are confirmed positive, possibly exposed, and also those that may need to self-isolate/quarantine, following established tracing protocols.

We will closely monitor for positive test results, and we will regularly review the number of confirmed cases for safety purposes, while following all necessary privacy restrictions, as determined by the Department of Public Health. Monitoring rates of positive infections will inform our decision-making process regarding the continued safety of our campus community.

Local commuter students may also contact the Berkshire Health Systems (BHS) COVID-19 hotline for questions regarding the novel coronavirus between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. seven days a week at: 855-262-5465.

### **Immunization Requirements**

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires all full-time college students under 30 years old to provide proof of immunization for a variety of diseases. The specifics can be found here: <http://www.mcla.edu/Assets/MCLA-Files/Student-Life/Wellness/HealthService/col-im-req-2019-2020.pdf>. In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, it is essential that we are extra vigilant to not introduce the possibility of additional contagious viruses/diseases to campus. Health Services has already contacted those students who still need to provide this immunization proof. Please contact them directly at [Healthservices@mcla.edu](mailto:Healthservices@mcla.edu) to follow up.

We will strictly adhere to this requirement and *all resident students who have not provided proof of immunization to Health Services or made arrangements with them PRIOR to move-in, will not be allowed to move into residence areas until this requirement has been satisfied. All commuter students who have not provided proof of immunization or made arrangements with Health Services due to their circumstance before classes begin may be at risk of disenrollment.*

### **Campus Cleaning and Sanitization**

MCLA will follow CDC, MA Department of Public Health and DCAMM guidelines regarding cleaning and sanitation. Work has been done to ensure that all cleaning chemicals are approved to disinfect and stop the spread of COVID -19 (per EPA/CDC recommendations).

Details for maintaining specific areas:

- Classrooms will be fogged at least twice daily and each classroom will be equipped with bottles of disinfectant and paper towels.
- Bathrooms will be fogged at varying frequencies and at least once daily, and a bottle of ES 64H sanitizer will be in place.
- Offices will be fogged once daily, and a bottle of ES 64H will be available.
- Common areas and elevators will be fogged once daily.
- Residence areas will see a heightened cleaning schedule.

Other efforts are underway to ensure a clean campus, including the installation of 50 additional hand sanitizing stations across campus in high-traffic areas and offices. Additionally, air filters will be changed out in greater frequency as recommended by DCAMM. Facilities staff will operate under modified schedules to allow for increased cleaning needs at various times including late nights and very early mornings. A partnership has been established with external services to provide emergency cleaning needs on campus.

In a number of areas on campus, efforts have been made to de-densify spaces as necessary to aid in cleaning efforts. Classrooms and common areas across campus have had excess furniture beyond what is allowed for safe social distancing removed and signage is being placed across campus to help with traffic flow and social distancing practices.

### **Fall 2020 Course Schedule**

This fall, MCLA [courses](#) will be in-person, in a blended format, or fully online. Continue to check your course schedule for updates in Self-Service Banner, and contact your Department Chair (if you have declared your major) or advisor (if you have an undeclared major), or the [Registrar's Office](#) with questions. This semester, the Add/Drop process will be online should you need to make changes to your schedule. New this year is Early Add/Drop for all sophomores, juniors, and seniors, and it begins August 24. Regular Add/Drop for all students begins the first day of classes on September 2.

### **MCLA Bookstore**

The Bookstore encourages students to order books online so that they will be available for easy pickup upon arrival to campus. To order, log in at [MCLAshop.com](http://MCLAshop.com) and follow these steps:

1. Click the textbook icon to the left of the search bar to get to the "Get Your Textbooks" page.
2. Select Fall 2020 in the "Select Term" drop box.

3. Select the academic department, then input your course and section codes for each of your courses which can be found in Banner.
4. Click “Find Materials for Course(s)” at the bottom of the page.
5. This will bring you to a page with all of the books for each of the course. Add each text to your cart and check out as you would at any other online marketplace.

Please check your email for messages that your order has been received and then fulfilled. You will be able to pick your books up from the Mailroom when you arrive on campus. If you have questions, please feel free to contact [william.taylor@mcla.edu](mailto:william.taylor@mcla.edu).

### **Library**

This fall, Freel Library remains committed to supporting your academic and personal success and well-being while doing our part to keep the MCLA community as safe as possible. There will be some changes from last year. Hours and seating capacity will be reduced. Tables and chairs have been arranged to comply with distancing guidelines and may not be moved. Some areas of the building will be unavailable for use. Other aspects of the library will look familiar. Our rich collections and expert staff are still available to you online and in person. You can still visit the library and use computers, borrow course reserve readings, print, copy, scan, and browse most of the book stacks. A limited number of laptops are available for short-term or semester loan. And you'll find some new services, too. You can now request books in advance and pick them up at the circulation desk. A new book scanner will let you create accessible PDFs from print materials quickly and easily. Please visit the library website for more information and follow the guidance on signage posted throughout the library building. Stay connected with the library on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter at @mclalibrary.

### **Fitness Center**

We are excited to announce that the Trailblazer Fitness Center renovation project is finally complete! This new state-of-the-art facility will be open during the fall semester. The space offers new strength and cardio equipment, as well as an indoor walking track. Users will be expected to follow MCLA safety/social distancing guidelines and the Fitness Center will adhere to Massachusetts Phase 3 standards for fitness facilities. More details will be shared upon your return to campus.

### **Parking Permits**

Parking permits for all students are now being managed by the Department of Public Safety. Vehicles parked on campus must be registered with Public Safety and have a valid parking decal. The vehicle you plan to register must be owned by you, a parent or legal guardian, or a spouse. Commuter decals are \$30 per semester and authorize parking in designated commuter lots; Resident student decals are \$100 per semester and authorize parking in designated

resident lots. Additional details for commuters and residents can be found in the sections below. To request a parking decal, complete the [Parking Pass Request](#).

## Specific Information for Resident Students

MCLA has developed a plan for residential living that we believe will provide the safest possible living and learning environment for our students in light of the continuing pandemic. We have carefully looked at each residence area and developed some guidelines for operation of each location. You will be provided with complete information upon move-in, but we think it is important to share the following information now to assist you in planning and preparing.

### Move-In Process

Residence area move-in will take place in a few short weeks, and many of you have already received information about moving in. Residential Programs and Services (RPS) is working to ensure that your move-in experience is as safe and convenient as possible, but given our current pandemic situation, there will be less flexibility in changing your move-in time and there will not be opportunities for early move-in. Here are some things you need to know:

- All students will receive a welcome kit containing face coverings, thermometer, hand sanitizer, and touchless door opener.
- New resident students will move in on Saturday, August 29. RPS will be contacting you in the next few days with your assigned move-in time.
- Returning resident students will move in Sunday, August 30 through Tuesday, September 1. You should already have received information about signing up for a move-in time, if not, please call Residential Programs and Services at 413-662-5249.
- All residents will be tested for COVID-19 prior to moving into their residence area. Information about where to report for testing will be provided by the week before you move-in.
- Please remember to pack light as you will need to move out at the Thanksgiving Break, and while we hope this will not be the case, you will need to also be prepared to move out at any time should conditions warrant. We highly recommend packing a quarantine bag with essential supplies for two weeks in the event of a positive COVID-19 test result.

All students arriving at MCLA who do not live in a low-risk state as outlined by the frequently updated MA COVID-19 travel order will be required to either:

- 1) produce a negative COVID-19 test result that has been administered no more than 72-hours prior to their arrival in Massachusetts, or
- 2) quarantine for 14 days or until they obtain a negative COVID-19 test result, whichever comes sooner.

All students from these locations have been contacted to finalize plans for move-in. If you have questions, please contact Dean of Students Heather Quire at 413-662-5103.

### **Additional Detail of Residential Life**

- **Cleaning:** All residence areas have been cleaned and sanitized during the summer months in preparation for your arrival to campus.
- **Guests/Visitors:** In order to minimize the introduction to or spread of COVID within each residence area, student access to each residence area is limited to those who live within that residence area. Residents will not be able to host any guests/visitors, including family members, MCLA commuters, or residents from other residence areas.
- **Visitors Within the Residence Area:** Residents may host one guest at a time from their residence area in their bedroom, provided both are wearing face coverings.
- **Elevators:** Elevators will remain open with maximum occupancy of two people at a time in accordance with state guidelines.
- **Kitchenettes:** Kitchenettes in Hoosac Hall and Berkshire Towers will be closed this fall, based on state and industry guidelines around cleaning and use of shared appliances and related supplies.
- **Lounges/Common Space:** Lounges and common space will remain open with posted maximum occupancy limits, and the expectation that students will wear a face covering and keep 6 feet apart.
- **Bathrooms:** Our facilities staff will clean bathrooms in Hoosac Hall and Berkshire Towers daily. Supplies will be maintained in each bathroom to allow students to clean fixtures between uses. Students in the Townhouses will be responsible for cleaning their own bathrooms and cleaning/disinfecting solutions will be provided.
- **Laundry:** Laundry is free this year to all residents in their own residence area. There will be limits to the number of students allowed in the laundry areas at once, and we ask that you be considerate of others as you use the space.
- **Townhouse Kitchens:** State and industry guidelines prohibit the shared use of pots, pans, dishes, cups, utensils, etc. Each townhouse resident is advised to bring their own personal cooking equipment and to consider the use of disposable plates, etc., for safety. Each resident will be expected to clean up after themselves to protect the other users of this common space.

### **Parking**

Parking is not guaranteed to all resident students, but all may complete the [Parking Pass Request](#) to request a decal. Seniors who have fulfilled the residency requirement are entitled to a parking decal as part of their senior perks, but must still complete the online request to obtain a decal. Resident students with academic experiences requiring them to regularly work/study off campus (student teaching, academic internship, RAD tech, etc.) will have priority for a parking decal if the experience is evidenced in their course schedule. Important note: this priority will only last while decals are still available; requests should be made as soon as possible to ensure availability.

All other students should submit the form requesting a decal if they wish to have a car on campus and once approved will be required to pay for the decal online to guarantee its availability upon arrival to campus.

### **Dining Services**

MCLA Dining Services, managed by Aramark, is committed to safety first in dining operations. Health and safety protocols exceed the CDC guidelines and are in full compliance with the same state guidelines required of restaurants. In future communications, we will provide you with links that more fully outline the steps our vendor is taking to ensure that campus dining is operating in the safest manner possible. In keeping with current guidelines, there will be no self-service and touchless service is being incorporated in all locations to the greatest extent possible.

Additional seating locations will be available due to occupancy limits. All locations will offer a meal equivalency swipe. An online ordering system is being established, as are separate entrance and exit points, a scheduling plan for Centennial Room dining, and queuing points for all operations.

**Centennial Room:** Occupancy capacity is 50. All stations will be open with separate queuing lines, and include multiple home zones (comfort foods) serving like items at lunch and dinner, pizza (served), grill (served), salad bar (pre-packaged), deli bar (pre-packaged), soup (served), Vegan (served), Gluten-free (served) and desserts (pre-packaged). A grab-and-go option will also be available at the Centennial Room entrance.

**Venable Gym:** Venable Gym will serve as an additional seating area for those who choose grab-and-go items. Occupancy capacity is 50.

**Outdoor Tables:** During warmer weather, outdoor seating will be available for those wishing to dine outside.

**Grab-and-Go Dining:** The POD, Bowman, and Centennial Room entrance will all feature a variety of grab-and-go items. Menus will include an entrée salad or sandwich, chips, fresh fruit, dessert and beverage.

**Trailblazer Café:** This area will serve as a pick-up location for online orders at lunch and dinner.

## **Specific Information for Commuter Students**

### **Parking**

All commuter students who need a commuter lot parking decal should complete the [Parking Pass Request](#) and submit payment when notified to do so. You will receive information about how/when to pick up your decal in the coming days.

With the end of construction in the Campus Center, the Bond Street parking lot will be available for use. There is also a new lot on Montana Street behind the Science Center with 12 parking spaces now available for use by commuter students.

### **Commuter Services**

Details will be sent to commuter students about a meeting on 8/29 where students can pick up their student IDs and welcome kits (containing face coverings, thermometer, hand sanitizer, and touchless door opener). Many club and organization events will be held virtually this year, making programming and getting involved more accessible to commuter students than ever before. Please contact Assistant Director of Student Engagement & Programming Natty Burfield with questions: [natty.burfield@mcla.edu](mailto:natty.burfield@mcla.edu).

### **Areas Available for Use Between Classes**

As we work to schedule all classes in accordance with state and industry guidelines, some meeting rooms and other areas are being designated as classrooms this semester. Once this is finalized, we will be able to offer more information about available gathering spaces for you to study and relax between classes.

We will share new information in additional communications before it's time to move to campus. Again, we're genuinely looking forward to seeing you. In the meantime, please use our COVID-19 hotline for questions regarding the fall semester: 413-662-5550, between 8:30 a.m.- 5 p.m., Monday-Friday. You can also leave us a message outside of these hours. Please use this number rather than calling individual offices.

I encourage you to also share this communication with your family as you prepare to return to campus.

Cathy

***Catherine Holbrook, Ph.D.***  
***Vice President, Student Affairs***  
***Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts***  
***375 Church Street***  
***North Adams, MA 01247***  
***email: [Catherine.Holbrook@mcla.edu](mailto:Catherine.Holbrook@mcla.edu)***  
***phone: 413-662-5231***  
***Pronouns: she/her***