Western Dakota Tech - Responsible Restart Plan for Fall 2020

Western Dakota Tech plans to provide technical classes on campus starting Monday, August 24, 2020 (unless the classes are designated "on-line" classes).

This Responsible Restart Plan was developed with the following guiding principles:

1. Following CDC, South Dakota, regional, and local guidelines for reopening.
2. Maintaining the health and safety of our students, employees, and community members.
3. Designing appropriate student experiences that balance health and safety with quality.
4. Maintaining a focus on quality teaching and learning.

The following changes will be put in place by Western Dakota Tech in response to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- All classrooms, labs, and lecture classrooms have been assessed to determine the maximum capacity while adhering to social distancing guidelines.
- Depending on the course, some classes will be conducted in a hybrid environment with a combination of in-person and online.
- Some courses will be delivered entirely remotely through WDT's learning management system. These have been identified as "online" courses.
- The services that students rely on, such as the Library and Student Success Center, will be open with services available in person or online.
- Dining services will be closed for the Fall 2020 semester. The Spring 2021 semester will be reevaluated at a later time. Limited snack options are available in the campus bookstore, with expanded "grab and go" food options that might include items such as hot and cold sandwiches, mini-pizzas, or salads.
- While programs and activities will look different, we are committed to providing excellent student engagement experience for our students.
- All college staff, faculty, students, and campus visitors will wear masks or face shields while on campus, except when they are working alone at their desks in a closed-office space. Self-screening of each employee will be conducted daily. All college staff, faculty, students, and campus visitors will follow all social distancing guidelines. Markers and signage have been placed in key locations to assist with these efforts.
- Faculty will include mask and social distancing requirements in their course syllabi. Students who do not want to wear masks will be invited to join classes remotely. Students who are intentionally non-compliant with mask and social distancing requirements will be subject to disciplinary action under the WDT Code of Conduct.
- Because of the importance of accurate attendance records, students are required to participate actively in all classes and labs, whether delivered remotely or in

person. Students who fail to attend and participate will be counted absent, which will have an adverse impact on students' scholarships and federal financial aid.

- All classrooms, labs, and campus common areas will be cleaned and disinfected frequently, following CDC guidelines.

Preparations for the Fall Semester

COVID-19 Planning Committee: Five work teams researched and developed recommendations in the following areas with staff and faculty represented from varying departments:

1. Instructional Impact – Academic Support, Team Leaders, Registrar's Office, Corporate Education and IT
2. Building Safety and Personal Protective Equipment – Marketing, Human Resources, Foundation and Enrollment Services
3. On-Campus Events – President's Office, Academics, Student Success Center and Enrollment Services
4. Facility / Dining – Facilities and President's Office
5. Travel – Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success, Career and Technical Ed and Enrollment Services

Regional Alignment: President Ann Bolman is the primary point of contact with Pennington County Emergency Management and Monument Health. President Bolman remains in regular contact with local leaders to maintain alignment between regional guidelines and college decisions and operations.

Academic Plan

Barring any unforeseen changes for the fall semester, Western Dakota Tech will restart operations with our programs delivered on campus on August 24, 2020. Additionally, some courses will be delivered online via MyWDT, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, or a combination.

All classroom and lab spaces have been analyzed by the President's Office, Academics and the Registrar's Office with course schedules developed under the following guiding design principles:

- Ensure alignment with physical distancing protocols.
- Balance requirements to migrate learning to a virtual platform with the need for the on-campus learning environments of skills-based programs.

Schedule Summary—Highlights and Overarching Themes

- Lecture courses will be offered as originally scheduled with face-to-face and online sections (when applicable).

- Lab courses will be offered in-person or in a hybrid manner.

- Clinical and internship courses will be offered as originally scheduled; however, these courses are primarily off campus with students engaged at a specific clinical/internship site. Students will be required to follow all requirements set forth by the clinical/internship site.

- Off-site dual enrollment courses will follow the requirements set forth by the hosting high school with dual enrollment students/faculty members following host high school requirements accordingly.

- Students in developmental/remedial courses perform statistically better when enrolled in face-to-face classes compared to distance learning courses, so these courses will be delivered primarily on campus.

- CDC recommendations for occupancy per square foot in classrooms and labs to ensure social distancing will be followed. Based upon a review of available classrooms, there are adequate existing spaces at Western Dakota Tech to accommodate the current course offerings.

Laboratory Sections

Few laboratory sections lend themselves well to online instruction; however, for those that do, Western Dakota Tech plans for them to be fully migrated. It is also anticipated that many laboratory sections will run in a hybrid manner. In this situation, the enrolled students for a specific laboratory section would be subdivided into two smaller cohorts. To keep the number of people in lab space as low as possible, during any given scheduled laboratory day, one cohort would have an on-campus experience with the other cohort engaged in an online learning environment.

For those laboratory sections that are unable to migrate any of the required learning online (e.g. machining, welding, etc.), it is the intention that all students be required to report to laboratory class on each day that class is scheduled.

The laboratory spaces are large enough to accommodate physical distancing protocols without decreasing course caps. In situations where laboratory spaces are smaller (e.g. electronics labs), other classroom spaces will be temporarily re-purposed into laboratory space to increase overall capacity, thus enabling conformation to physical distancing protocols.

Access to non-use spaces will be monitored and only scheduled for use through a central location where social distancing guidelines can be monitored.

Additional Instructional Considerations

Social distancing will be maintained in instructional laboratory sections by decreasing the number of people per laboratory room. This will provide enough laboratory equipment so each person has their own, preventing the need for lab groups. The lab equipment in each instructional lab will be arranged to allow proper distancing between people.

For computer labs, half of the computers will be removed from or restricted within each lab and where feasible reallocated to a different room to ensure proper distancing between machines or disabling them to only allow the correct number of users in each lab. All lab staff will monitor the space and ensure the safety and correct usage of the facilities.

Common Learning Areas & Library/Student Success Center

- One-on-one tutoring will occur in the main area in the Library/Success Center with designated physically distanced areas.

- Total occupancy of the Library/Student Success Center will be monitored to meet square footage requirements per CDC guidelines.

- The Library will offer computer access with every other station disabled to maintain distancing.

- Study tables, seating throughout campus, and areas in the Commons have been arranged to establish appropriate physical distancing.

- The Library, Bookstore, Success Center, Financial Aid, IT, and Student Accounts services will be offered both in person and remotely.

Faculty Development

The Academic Support staff are holding synchronous and asynchronous sessions, in conjunction with our Library to train on best practices in design and delivery. Group and individual sessions are held for technical support and course enhancement. Western Dakota Tech plans to expand on this effort by implementing professional development workshops and providing primary support for individual faculty in the quest to hone their instruction strategies.

Student Success and Support Online

The Academic and IT Support staff will be offering several trainings to employees on student success as well as understanding the technical expectations of working in a remote setting. The Student Success Center staff will conduct new student orientations and IT Support Staff will have a real-time tech support via MS Teams for immediate responses to technical and operational questions. The Student Success Center and Library staff, IT support, and peer tutors will be available both online and in-person for orientation, remote learning, and technical assistance.

Operational Plan

Our operational plans are based on the academic plan to offer the vast majority of technical classes on campus while making other courses available online to maintain a high-quality student learning experience. All student-facing offices will be open for regular hours of operations and with 100% of student services also available via remote delivery.

Building Safety and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The building safety work team has established protocols for facilities cleaning (particularly high-use areas) and PPE acquisition (with a guide of maintaining a 90-day inventory supply). Their recommendations have guided the following plans for workplace safety to minimize the spread of COVID-19.

Cleaning and Sanitation Standards

- WDT will implement strict cleaning and sanitation standards that include encouraging handwashing, using hand sanitizing stations, and promoting good personal hygiene.
- WDT will stagger use of classrooms or times between classes, allowing Facilities to clean used classrooms.
- WDT will provide necessary supplies and protocols for staff to disinfect personal office space to allow Facilities staff to follow a more aggressive schedule to clean classrooms and high-use areas.
- WDT will limit bathroom availability and clean hourly per CDC guidelines.
- WDT will turn off public drinking fountains to prevent the spread of the virus.
- WDT will maintain a 90-day supply of PPE inventory.
- WDT will monitor HVAC ventilation in all buildings for any abnormalities or concerns.

Density Reduction

In addition to limited academic offerings, density reduction of the workforce will be a priority.

- Western Dakota Tech resumed normal on-campus hours of operation (7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.) with few exceptions on Monday, May 18.
- New full-time faculty will begin on Monday, August 10 and all full-time returning faculty will begin on Monday, August 17.
- Maximum capacity guidelines have been established along with efforts to minimize visitors on campus.
- Physical work space will be adjusted to accommodate social distancing standards (e.g., 1:1 student advising) and plexiglass barriers have been installed at all service windows.
- Meetings will continue virtually, even when on campus, to reduce the number of people in one room.
- Available seating will be reduced along with reconfigured study areas and computer desks available to students in order to observe the 6-foot distancing protocol.

- The Western Dakota Tech Event Center and conference rooms will be reserved for College use, and room reservations from external parties will be strictly limited.

Infection Prevention and Control

The President monitors the spread of the coronavirus daily and receives regular updates on effective measures for controlling the spread of the virus from state and local officials. Western Dakota Tech will follow city, regional, and state guidance to mitigate the risks of second or third waves.

Reporting and Monitoring

Our Facilities staff provide front-line infection prevention and control efforts. Since COVID-19 began, the Vice President for Finance and Operations and the President have established strong communication channels with Pennington County Emergency Management and created effective internal and external reporting and communication protocols. Additionally, WDT is hiring custodial staff necessary to ensure a safe and healthy environment for employees, students, and campus visitors.

Monitoring and Testing

At this time, Western Dakota Tech follows CDC guidelines related to monitoring. Employees and students are trained and educated to self-monitor symptoms daily. If an employee reports to work or a student comes to campus, it is the assumption that they are feeling well and are not experiencing symptoms. If an employee or student does experience symptoms after coming to campus, they are to leave the premises. Barring any further changes to guidelines or directives and given the cost and logistical complexity of monitoring and testing, Western Dakota Tech does not intend to assume the direct role of taking temperatures for all employees and students, nor does the college intend to pay for tests at this time. However, the Director of Human Resources and Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success will actively engage with supervisors, employees, and students to maintain an active system of monitoring symptoms and activating protocols should individuals demonstrate cause for concern with regard to COVID-19.

Contact Tracing

The South Dakota Department of Health has authority to conduct contact tracing and will do so in collaboration with WDT's Human Resources Office for tracing potential exposures of infected employees and with WDT's Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success in the case of infected students. Tracing includes, but is not limited to, interviewing employees, supervisors, and students. All contact tracing involving WDT exposures will follow SD DOH requirements and will be coordinated with local health and emergency officials.

Prevention Measures

- All WDT employees and students will be provided one reusable WDT-branded face covering. Additional disposable masks and face coverings will be available if

needed as all employees will be required to wear a face covering in all public spaces.

- Each student and visitor will be required to wear a face covering in public spaces. They will be asked to leave the campus building if they refuse to comply, and students may be subject to disciplinary action. Remote access to College classes and services will be provided as a COVID-19 accommodation.

- Physical distancing protocols will be established and enforced in all college locations, classrooms, offices, and shared spaces.

Employee Relations

The COVID-19 Planning Committee has reviewed various scenarios and issues associated with COVID-19 and implications for employees returning to campus. Their recommendations comprise an Employee Relations Action Plan that is summarized as follows:

- We must all do our part to protect the health and wellbeing of our fellow employees and students by following all the CDC guidelines along with federal, state and city orders related to the COVID-19 outbreak:
  - Practice personal hygiene
  - Monitor for symptoms
  - Practice social distancing
  - Wear a mask

- Mask alternatives: Masks are worn to decrease the amount of force of the exhaled contaminants. Therefore, there are acceptable alternatives which can either be used in lieu of or complimentary to facial masks. For example, if a sufficient plexi-glass barrier is in place for a desk, the desk occupant may opt to not wear a mask. In most cases, a facial shield of sufficient coverage can be used in lieu of or in combination with a mask.

  - Whenever there is significant potential that social distancing of six feet cannot be adhered to, masks are required.

  - Instructors may wear a face shield in place of a mask provided they are greater than six feet from any student. Another alternative is for microphones in the classrooms.

- All employees will self-screen at the beginning of the day by taking their temperature at the door or they may take their temperature at home prior to coming to work. If they have the following symptoms, they will either need to stay home or go home: fever of 100.4 degrees or more, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle aches, or new loss of taste or smell.

- If symptoms develop during the day, go home immediately. If symptoms develop while not working, do not return to work until you have been evaluated by a healthcare provider. If you must stay home, you may work remotely.

- Watch COVID-19 training/informational videos:
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EhpRnnEYViM
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eg1ixwE6XBw

- Attention will be given to EEOC guidance and reasonable accommodations for employees as necessary, including working remotely.
- All policies will be reviewed with refinements to existing policies and development of new policies completed as necessary. All related legal issues will be reviewed to ensure compliance with any changes to work environment.

WDT Employee Travel Guidelines

Work-related travel may be resumed on a limited basis under the following conditions:

1. A virtual option is not available or conducive;
2. It is crucial to the execution of projects and delivery of services;
3. Employee consents to traveling and is comfortable traveling;
4. Employee agrees to abide by CDC's Travel Guidance found at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-in-the-us.html including the proper use of PPE such as face masks; and
5. The President gives prior approval.

   - However, employees should evaluate the pandemic situation in the county or counties where travel will occur and any restrictions in place for facilities in which the work will be done before traveling.

   - Travel is only permissible if the employee agrees that if they are exposed to COVID-19 they will be expected to be quarantined at home while consulting medical attention and, if necessary, being tested.

   - If you must self-quarantine as required by the CDC guidelines, contact your supervisor and Theresa Scharn-Director of Human Resources (theresa.scharn@wdt.edu).

Communication, Outreach and Training

The COVID-19 Planning Committee has reviewed various scenarios and communication and training issues associated with COVID-19 with implications for returning to campus. Their recommendations comprise the Communication and Outreach Action Plan that is summarized as follows:

- Students and employees will receive WDT-related COVID-19 updates via WDT email, text, and on our website at: wdt.edu/COVID.

- Long-established community relationships have been leveraged as necessary with leaders in local governmental, healthcare, non-profit service providers, private industry, and educational partner organizations.

- We will communicate our restart plans with employees, students, vendors, and community members openly and clearly as necessary. As needed, WDT will issue emergency notifications and timely warnings to students, employees, and related stakeholders.

- Significant concerns will be immediately communicated to relevant SD leaders and the Governor's Office, as appropriate.

- Coordination and collaboration with other educational institutions will occur wherever possible.

- Protocols have been established for "return to work" communications so employees are empowered with timely, relevant, and accurate information to inform their personal decisions and actions.

- A workplace signage plan will be developed to provide clear direction throughout Western Dakota Tech facilities and intentionally shape individual behaviors and campus traffic to comply with established guidelines.

- Liability processes will be developed to mitigate college exposure with COVID-19 issues.

- Training and support have been provided for employees regarding work conditions on campus. Additional information will be shared as conditions change and as updates are developed.

- Communications will be prepared in anticipation of various scenarios including incidents of active cases with employees and students.

Community Interactions

Western Dakota Tech is currently strictly limiting the use of College facilities by non-WDT groups through the rest of 2020. This strategy will allow for WDT's students, faculty, and staff to use the large meeting spaces for classes and activities and meet CDC and local requirements for social distancing. All external requests for facilities usage are provided to the President's Office for consideration and will be approved only in situations where the event can be conducted following WDT, local, and State guidelines.

Our Responsible Restart Plan is based in WDT's Emergency Plan for pandemics, which was recently updated to clarify communication strategies with state and local authorities. In addition, we currently have open lines of communication with our local hospital and engage with them regularly.

Remote Technologies for Students and Employees

The COVID-19 Planning Committee has reviewed various scenarios and related issues associated with COVID-19 and implications for returning to campus. Their recommendations identify internet access solutions for students and employees in both urban and rural settings. In addition, our IT Department has inventoried the office technology equipment of all employees to address the remote-working needs to support operations through the 2020-2021 academic year.

Workforce Development

Western Dakota Tech is continuing to remain responsive to the needs of the community and the business industry. At each phase of the return-to-work plan, we are closely aligning with best practices and guidelines as we deploy the classes and/or staff

necessary to continue meeting the training needs of our community and businesses. For example, courses offered through our Corporate Education Office have continued while following social distancing guidelines. Local industry entities can continue scheduling custom training opportunities through the Corporate Education Office.

Transition to Remote Learning Plan

If the circumstance should arise where a surge in COVID-19 cases occurs in the county or region and Western Dakota Tech must transition to a completely remote operation, transition strategies will be implemented similar to last spring. With a conservative density-reduction plan, employees will already be well-positioned to work remotely, and instruction will be offered through remote delivery. Technical classes using specialized equipment will be temporarily suspended until it is safe to return to campus. If the campus becomes the hotspot, we will work with the South Dakota Department of Health and Pennington County Emergency Management to plan and coordinate an appropriate evacuation. In all cases, when a timely warning or emergency notification needs to occur, WDT will follow established communication plans outlined in the College's Emergency Plan.