

Jan. 3, 2022

Good afternoon,

For those staff, faculty and students back on campus, welcome back. To all, let's hope 2022 is a better year for us all than the previous two. I'd like to take a moment to provide an update on campus plans as we begin this new year.

First, the campus Response and Recovery team continues to monitor COVID conditions. The reported infection rate reported by the Maryland Department of Health continues to be high in this region. The spread and severity of the Omicron variant is different from that of the previous Delta variant. Some models are showing a quick spike and decline in this variant. MDH is once again reporting data, and we will continue to monitor the data.

The most important recommendation I can offer is to wear a mask when you are with other people, especially indoors or when you are close to others outdoors. The lack of mask wearing in the region is contrary to health guidance. USM is also strongly recommending that everyone get a booster shot if eligible. You can now upload booster information through our covid check-in portal. Go to www.frostburg.edu/checkin and upload under "My Vaccinations." As a campus, we will continue to follow the science and CDC guidelines with respect to vaccination protocols.

A rapid antigen test is required of all individuals returning to campus following the winter break. Please comply with this requirement. Thank you to the nearly 400 members of our campus community who tested today.

With the start of the spring semester three weeks away, we continue to plan for a spring semester similar to our in-person fall semester. I suggest that faculty plan on providing alternative pathways through Canvas for individual students who may need to isolate or quarantine for a brief period of time.

Please recognize that conditions can change, and we will be prepared to respond appropriately. I anticipate frequent meetings with the USM Office and other campus leaders throughout January. My regular weekly message will come out on Thursday of this week to allow for input from some of these meetings. We will continue to keep the campus informed on a regular basis as the month progresses. Please also check our COVID website (www.frostburg.edu/COVID-19) for answers to your specific questions.

For now, please continue to follow [CDC health guidelines](https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2022/s0103-covid-19-guidelines) on campus and in the community for your and your family's health and our community.

Ronald Nowaczyk, PhD
President

Frostburg State University
101 Braddock Road
Frostburg, MD 21532-2303

Voice: 301.687.4111

Fax: 301.687.7070



One University. A World of Experiences.