NEW MEXICO
HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

REOPENING CAMPUSES

New Mexico Higher Education's Plan To Reopen
On-Campus Classes, Activities, and Events

Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham's exceptional leadership during the coronavirus crisis has enabled New Mexico to plan for a safe and careful reopening of the state including businesses, public schools and higher education. This plan outlines how higher education will participate in that reopening.

New Mexico's Higher Education institutions responded quickly to the pandemic. They served students with on-line, remote and alternative instruction; managed campus operations; and provided essential support, expertise, equipment and facilities to their communities and state. Virtual graduations are currently underway throughout the state and on-line classes will take place throughout the summer.

New Mexico's Higher Education institutions are planning to provide a mix of in person and remote classes and expand research and service efforts by the fall term. Be assured, higher education will take a measured approach to reopening campus facilities and protocols will be deployed to reduce virus transmissions. Future decisions will depend on the epidemiological data, public health models, COVID Safe Practices (CSPs) and directives from Governor Lujan Grisham. Recommendations from the *New Mexico Reopening Plan* drafted by the Economic Recovery Council will also inform higher education's work.

The primary message is this: Opening campuses safely is the number one goal for higher education. This document provides guidelines that higher education will use to achieve that goal. Developing the specific plans for each institution is the responsibility of the leaders at that institution. New Mexico's college and university differ in mission, location and governance structure, and one plan will not fit all institutions. While the Presidents all urged flexibility for their unique situations, all are deeply committed to remaining agile, responsive, and vigilant if quick modifications are necessary.

.Katharine Winograd
Higher Education Advisor

Executive Summary: Reopening Campuses

Why Is It Important to Reopen Higher Education Institutions?

New Mexico's future depends on higher education. The people who provide health care, conduct medical and scientific research, take care of the vulnerable, teach our children, keep our communities safe, drive the trucks, farm and ranch the land, run the large and small businesses, create the arts, grow the next generation of tribal leaders and run the vital services of government – all of these people get their education at community colleges and/or universities. Our culture, commerce, and the future fiscal success of the state depend on a vibrant system of higher education. Higher education provides a public benefit to New Mexico and is critical to New Mexico's economic and social recovery.

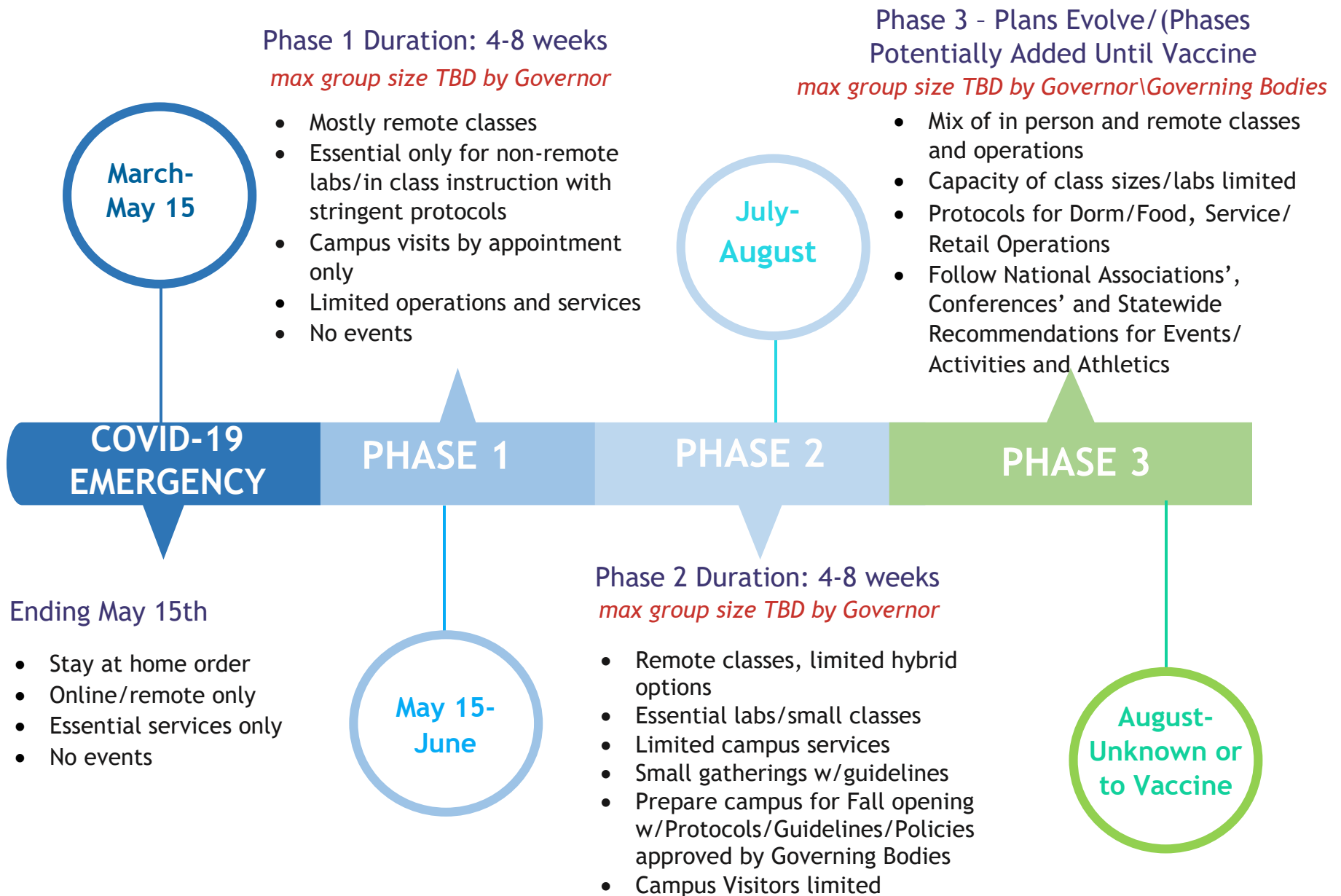**Why Specific College and University Plans May Differ?**

Colleges and universities throughout New Mexico have different missions, serve different students (e.g. graduate students, career technical students, adult basic education students). College and universities also are located throughout the state. Higher education institutions also have unique governance structures. Although each campus will follow the Governor's state-wide directives, it is important to note that each college and university will design plans with protocols, guidelines and schedules that address the diverse safety needs and issues for their students, faculty, staff and community members.

What will campus leaders need to reopen campuses safely and quickly?

Higher education leaders continue to discuss, research and seek advice on areas that will require attention and help. These areas include testing and tracing, reducing employees' risk of exposure, steps required to address absenteeism, changes in student and employee expectations, interrupted supply/equipment delivery for classrooms, and training for faculty and staff.

Where Higher Education Institutions will need guidance and help:

Higher education leaders are requesting guidance, support and funding for testing and tracing. They also want to know if New Mexico will use the CDC guidelines or develop our own definition for "vulnerable individuals," to help guide policies and procedures. They are asking if higher education will be able to require students and employees to be vaccinated, something only required by law for K-12. All institutions are concerned about the state's limited broadband services for students and employees and the Tribal Colleges specifically asked for assistance extending the FTC broadband waiver. Lastly, higher education is committed to the education and training of essential personnel; therefore, direction about high demand needs will inform colleges and universities about what programs should be a priority as they establish their strategies to reopen campuses.

Phase 1 Duration: 4-8 weeks
max group size TBD by Governor

- Mostly remote classes
- Essential only for non-remote labs/in class instruction with stringent protocols
- Campus visits by appointment only
- Limited operations and services
- No events

Phase 3 – Plans Evolve/(Phases Potentially Added Until Vaccine
max group size TBD by Governor\Governing Bodies

- Mix of in person and remote classes and operations
- Capacity of class sizes/labs limited
- Protocols for Dorm/Food, Service/ Retail Operations
- Follow National Associations', Conferences' and Statewide Recommendations for Events/ Activities and Athletics

March- May 15

July- August

| COVID-19 EMERGENCY | PHASE 1 | PHASE 2 | PHASE 3 |

Ending May 15th

- Stay at home order
- Online/remote only
- Essential services only
- No events

May 15- June

Phase 2 Duration: 4-8 weeks
max group size TBD by Governor

- Remote classes, limited hybrid options
- Essential labs/small classes
- Limited campus services
- Small gatherings w/guidelines
- Prepare campus for Fall opening w/Protocols/Guidelines/Policies approved by Governing Bodies
- Campus Visitors limited

August- Unknown or to Vaccine

OVERVIEW OF CAMPUS REOPENING PHASES

Failure to minimize impacts of Covid-19 will result in return to previous phases as necessary *guidelines and protocols developed and approved by each institution			

ACTIVITIES	PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3
Gathering Size – 5 or <	TBD by Governor	TBD by Governor	TBD – Governor/Governing Bodies
Opening Campuses to Employees			
Tier I Critical and Emergency Operations/Services	Operate with social distancing protocols and exempted from gathering size if situation is critical		
Tier II Essential Operations/Services for Students and Campus Operations	Remote Work Continues for Many, Essential Services Only, Staggered Schedules, Vulnerable Workers Stay Home	Social Distance Protocols required Vulnerable Workers Stay Home	Continued Protocol Required for Employees
Tier III Other Operations and Services for Students and Employees	No Change – Remote Work	Social Distance Protocols required Vulnerable Workers Stay Home	Continued Protocol Required for Employees
Work Study Students, Graduate Students and Other Student Employees	Social Distance, Special Protocols and Only Essential Work (Research)	Social Distance Protocols required Vulnerable Workers Stay Home	Continued Protocol Required for Employees
Opening Classes to Students			
Classes – On-Line Only	No Change – on-line classes will continue	No Change – on-line classes will continue	No Change – on-line classes will continue

Classes – Flex (On-line with some lab/hands on or small class time)	On-line with limited hands on and face to face classes (with exceptions for essential workforce training)	On-line with limited hands on and face to face classes (with exceptions for essential workforce training)	Social Distance Protocol required
Classes – Classroom, face to face	No Change – Closed	Very Limited, determined by data and directives, Size restrictions for social distancing, protocol required	Social Distance Protocol required
Labs/Hands-on Instruction/CTE Classes	Only For Essential Programs With Strict Protocols	Only For Essential Programs With Strict Protocols	Social Distance Protocol required
Research Labs Open to Students	Only Critical Faculty and Students Following Social Distancing and Strict Protocols	Limited Faculty and Students Following Social Distancing and Strict Protocols if situation permits	Social Distance Protocol required
Apprenticeships, Clinical, Service Learning, etc.	No Change – Essential Programs Only with Strict Guidelines and Protocols	No Change – Essential Programs Only with Strict Guidelines and Protocols	Strict Guidelines and Protocols
Opening Campus Support Systems to Students			
Dorms/Required Food Service	No Change – Limited Occupancy, Additional Cleaning Protocols	No Change – Limited Occupancy	Well Defined Protocols and Strict Guidelines
Cafeteria/Food Service	No Change – Services for Students in Dorms Only- Additional Cleaning Protocols	No Change – Services for Students in Dorms Only	Strictly Limited Protocol required
Specific Student Centers (i.e. VA Center)	No Change – Closed	Limited Services -Based on capacity and safety limits	Social Distance Protocol required
Student Food Courts	Follow State Guidelines for Businesses, Pick-up only	Follow State Guidelines for Businesses	Follow State Guidelines for Businesses, Very Limited with Social Distance and Reduced Capacity
Libraries	No Change – Closed	Limited Services -Based on capacity and safety limits	Social Distance Protocol required

Testing Centers	On-line Where Possible Limited Services - Based on capacity and safety limits	Limited Services -Based on capacity and safety limits	Social Distance Protocol required
Computer Labs	Only Essential Use With Strict Protocols - Additional Cleaning Protocols	Limited Services -Based on capacity and safety limits	Social Distance Protocol required
Gyms/Fitness Centers	No Change – Closed	Follow State Guidelines for Businesses	Follow State Guidelines for Businesses, Very Limited with Social Distance and Reduced Capacity
Bookstores	Follow State Guidelines for Businesses, Curbside Pick-up	Follow State Guidelines for Businesses, Very Limited with Social Distance and Reduced Capacity	Follow State Guidelines for Businesses, Very Limited with Social Distance and Reduced Capacity
Low-risk recreation/sports (non-contact like golf)	Limited with Social Distance and Protocol required	Very Limited with Social Distance and Protocol required	Social Distance Protocol required
High-Risk Recreation/sports	None	Closely following national guidelines offered by associations and conferences for Athletics (i.e. NCAA, NAIA, NJCAA). No fans, gatherings meet group guidelines	Closely following national guidelines offered by associations and conferences for Athletics Social Distancing and Specific Fan Protocols (which might include no in person fans) will be established and reviewed before a season begins
Recruitment Visits	None	Limited with Social Distance and Other Protocols	Social Distance Protocol required
Student Group Meeting (i.e. Student Government)	None	None	Social Distance Protocol required
Opening Campus to the Community			
Summer Camps	None	None	N/A

Events/ Lectures (non-classroom)	None	None	Not likely, only when confident protocols keep participants safe
Conferences	None	On-line conferences only	Not likely, only when confident protocols keep participants safe
Meeting with Businesses/Others	On line where possible, critical meetings with social distancing and protocols	On line where possible, critical meetings with social distancing and protocols	On line where possible, critical meetings with social distancing and protocols
Other **(Guidelines and Protocols will be developed as situations present themselves during the COVID-19 crisis and the reopening phases. All guidelines will be developed, discussed and approved as appropriate by the Regents and Boards and will be distributed as broadly as possible and in a timely way.)**			
Business or Organizations Located on Campus	Follow Governors Directives	Follow Governors Directive	Open with Social Distancing
Business Travel for Students and Employees	No change – no travel	No change – no travel	Travel only approved for essential purposes and under strict guidelines

Higher Education's Commitments

- Higher Education leaders, Regents and Board members are keenly aware that students and their families count on them to create as safe an environment as possible. Students and their families have choices, and leaders understand they will only choose to return or start on a campus if they are confident that the institution has made every attempt possible to keep them safe.
- There is not one plan for higher education, but multiple plans under one overarching strategy: keep our students, faculty, staff and communities as safe as we possibly can. The Higher Education institutions serve unique groups of students and are located in communities with distinctive needs and risk factors. Therefore, all higher education institutions will continue to work with their Regents and Boards to document their COVID-19 plans, policies and decisions and will provide on-going communication with their constituents.
- The colleges and universities are all planning varying options to provide classes, student support services and campus operations. In each situation, the focus will be on providing high quality and safe experiences throughout the remainder of this health crisis.
- All colleges and universities will be prepared to return to a prior phase if the situation on their campus or in their community worsens based on epidemiological data, public health directives from government officials.
- Higher Education institutions will also be guided by and responsive to directives, regulations, rules, policies and protocol mandated by national, state and programmatic specific accrediting bodies, oversite commissions and organizations as well as state-wide executive orders throughout this pandemic.
- Colleges and Universities are committed to working together in unique and positive ways to create solutions for higher education and help solve some of the state's greatest issues.

Other Issues Higher Education Will Face:

- Financial challenges to manage increased and changed expenses related to student/employee safety and specific employee training on protocols and new working expectations.
- Reducing Workers' Risk of Exposure – rearranging offices, classrooms, open spaces; cleaning protocols, hand-washing protocols, personnel and leave policies encouraging students and regular employees to stay home if sick, encouraging respiratory etiquette, providing tissues and additional trash receptacles, discouraging joint use of phones, desks, and other work equipment, etc.
- Steps to Address Absenteeism – employees could be absent if they are sick, caregivers for sick family members, or caregivers for children if schools or day care centers are closed; have at risk people at home, or are afraid to come to work because they are fearful they will be exposed.
- Changes in student and employee expectations – on-line work and classes will change students' expectations creating a need for more technology and bandwidth.
- Interrupted supply/equipment delivery – cleaning supplies, personal protection equipment, teaching equipment in healthcare, etc.
- Employees will need specific training related to protocols as well as new working expectations. Will there be statewide efforts, guidance, or funding for these activities?
- Many students, employees and communities have been traumatized by the COVID-19 virus, will there be support to campuses to help with the healing process.

Preparation for Work (continued)

Guidance Required:

- Currently higher education is using the CDC guidelines to define "Vulnerable Individuals." Should higher education continue to use this definition for protocols and guidelines?
- The testing and tracing protocol will be important on higher education institutions. Will there be guidance and funding available for these activities? Will the state's current efforts be sufficient for covering the higher education institutions
- K-12 law includes requirements for vaccines; will higher education need to introduce legislation in order to require students and employees to be vaccinated when that option becomes available?
- The broadband limitations became a problem for many of our students, schools and colleges. This was especially true for New Mexico's Tribal Colleges who are asking for assistance in extending the FTC broadband waiver.

Monitoring Process

- Each higher education institution will provide monitoring processes and ensure the individuals on their campuses are following protocols and guidelines set in place by their administration, Regents and Governing Boards.
- Higher education institutions must work with their Regents and Boards to identify in advance, where possible, the trigger points that will cause their campuses to revert to a prior phase or to return to the stay-at-home requirements New Mexico experienced during the COVID-19 emergency.
- Each campus must also have a plan to respond to statewide triggers that respond to governmental directives and data that may return the state as a whole to a prior phase.
- Each higher education institution will collect data to document student and employee impacts due to transitions between phases, particularly focused on matters of equity and access.