

# Covid-19 & Fall 2021 at Pearson

(11 June 2021)

The rapid evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic in British Columbia and around the world makes staying abreast of changing public health, safety and travel protocols a challenge for everyone. Here on our campus, on the unceded territory of the Sc'ianew First Nation, we are pivoting frequently as public health and government officials share instructions and advice that helps Pearson ensure your health and safety preparations are comprehensive and up to date for Fall 2021 on campus.

On Vancouver Island, where our campus is located, within the Province of British Columbia and across Canada there is good reason to expect a continued flattening of the COVID curve. Canada has achieved rapid progress in rolling out first- and now, second-dose vaccinations and in reducing the number and severity of COVID cases and transmission. With these positive trends in mind, the Province of British Columbia had advised all post-secondary institutions (which includes Pearson for provincial purposes) to plan for an in-person fall term.

And, of course, we look forward to welcoming you, or welcoming you *back*, safely to campus and a vibrant learning and living experience at Pearson!

There are many credible and important sources of information about COVID and COVID mitigation (and we've listed many of these below) among them the Province's COVID-19 Return-to-Campus-Primer which helped guide Pearson and other institutions with their public health planning assumptions and safety measures needed for a safe return to campuses. Ultimately, BC's Provincial Health Officer's (PHO) direction will guide our planning.

Our COVID Campus and Community Safety Plan for the 2021-22 School Year is shown on this webpage and includes links to other relevant campus, Public Health and governmental information. Please check these and get in touch with us with any questions or concerns.

## On-campus Teaching and Learning

Our planning is supported by the Province's guidance for a return to, as much as possible, full in-class and in-person experiential learning. The health and safety of students and our entire campus community is our top priority, and we are planning accordingly in the unlikely event that a PHO order calls for a temporary halt to face-to-face classes or other on-campus activities. The experience gained by the College in 2020 has helped us prepare for all contingencies.

## Health and Safety

The PHO expects most of B.C.'s population to have received at least one dose of a COVID vaccine by the end of June 2021. Second doses are also beginning to be rapidly rolled out as of

this writing. The number of COVID cases has been falling as more people in British Columbia are being vaccinated and, as conditions improve, we anticipate a measured loosening of public health measures.

While subject to change by the PHO, core measures expected to be in place for at least the beginning of the 2021-22 school year could include:

- Completing a daily COVID-19 health self-assessment and not attending classes when ill
- Following handwashing and hygiene protocols
- Continuing enhanced daily cleaning protocols indoors and on high touch surfaces
- Recommended use of non-medical masks in congested indoor common areas
- Discouraging crowding and managing pedestrian traffic flow

## International Students & Vaccinations

Any B.C. resident aged 12 or over can register for a COVID-19 vaccine, including international and out-of-province students **living in B.C.** However, we strongly advise international residents to make every effort possible to get a vaccination in your homeland before arriving in Canada. Travel restrictions and quarantine regulations are continually being revised by the federal government but as the pandemic evolves it is likely that having proof of an approved vaccination before you travel will help expedite travel and entry procedures.

The College and Public Health authorities strongly encourage everyone to learn about the benefits and safety of COVID vaccinations and accept vaccination to protect themselves and others.

## International Students & Quarantines

Most international students have likely already applied for the student visa needed to study in Canada. If you have not done so yet, we strongly recommend applying as soon as possible because the application process can take weeks or months and Canadian offices overseas may sometimes face processing backlogs.

Federal regulations in place as of this writing require travellers from overseas, including students, to use the ArriveCAN app before arriving at a Canadian airport. As of this writing, any non-Canadian (or individuals with Permanent Resident status in Canada) arriving from outside Canada are **required by federal regulation** to self-isolate for 14 days upon arrival, including three days in a government authorized hotel in the city in which they initially land in Canada. There are a number of other requirements arriving students from international destinations need to follow. Please consult the ArriveCAN website and reference our posted Campus and Community Safety Plan for more information.

## Living on Campus

As a fully residential school that welcomed close to our full student cohort on campus for the 2020-21 year and did not experience a single known COVID case on campus during that time, we have learned a great deal about implementing protective and preventive health and safety measures. As guided by the PHO, and other regulatory bodies such as [WorkSafeBC](#) and the [Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development](#), we will continue to focus on maintaining a healthy, positive campus community.

Students at Pearson are accommodated in comfortable, updated four-to-a-room dorm rooms – generally with a total of 40 students in each residence house. As we did during the 2020-21 school year, the College will ensure that self-isolation and quarantine spaces will be available if needed to ensure individual and campus health is maintained.

## Student Life

A meaningful and engaging campus experience at Pearson goes a long way to ensuring your success. Connecting with peers and getting to know campus is important for all students, but especially for incoming first-year (and a few second-year) students who have not yet experienced the dynamic on-campus life here along Pedder Bay.

During the school year, public health orders will undoubtedly be updated and revised and these will have an impact – mostly positive, we hope – on campus life and experiences. We'll do our best to keep you updated and, as Public Health authorities permit, to bring campus life back to as close to a “pre-pandemic normal” as possible without compromising our health and safety practices.

## We're Looking Forward to Seeing You

The campus may seem quiet during summer months, but many people are working behind-the-scenes and with Public and regional health, Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development, WorkSafeBC and other officials to help ensure our campus is as safe as possible for the return of all students, residents, faculty and staff. When you come, or return, to campus, don't forget to say “thanks” to those on staff who can be considered front-line workers (like teachers, cleaners and food prep and servers) and do your part to keep everyone safe and well.

## Online Resources

- [Province of British Columbia COVID-19 Homepage](#)
- [BC Centre for Disease Control \(BCCDC\) COVID-19 Homepage](#)
- [BC's Four-Step Restart Plan](#)
- [Government of Canada COVID-19 Information for International Students](#)
- [Government of Canada ArriveCAN Webpage](#)
- [World Health Organization \(WHO\) COVID-19 Dashboard](#)

