

29 December 2021

Update 2 – Winter Break 2021-22 Planning

I hope this message finds you well and enjoying your time with family, your Host Family and/or friends during Winter Break. The pandemic continues to have an impact globally with changing conditions and responses by governments. The purpose of this message is to provide an update on College direction and guidance to support the safe return of students to campus and, in light of changing pandemic conditions, measures to keep students healthy, safe and engaged in their program and studies.

Omicron Spreading Rapidly

As many of you will have seen in the news and various media, the Omicron variant of COVID-19 is spreading quickly in Canada and around the world with record high case counts in many Canadian provinces, the United States, Europe, Australia and elsewhere, keeping workers at home and overwhelming testing centres. While medical authorities are suggesting Omicron is less deadly than its predecessors, huge numbers of people testing positive mean that health systems may be overwhelmed and businesses may struggle to operate because of workers having to quarantine. World Health Organization Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said today "Delta and Omicron are now twin threats...I am highly concerned that Omicron, being highly transmissible and spreading at the same time as Delta, is leading to a tsunami of cases."

New Direction/Guidance for Return to Campus

Outlined below are updated directions and guidance for your return to Pearson College. The directions and guidance are broken down into three sections for (1) Home Stay Students, (2) International Students and (3) Canadian Students, including those international students who are guests of Canadian student families. Please read carefully information below that is related to each of the above sections.

In view of the highly infectious nature of Omicron, there will be a program for on-campus testing of students shortly after arrival, the first 2 weeks of academics (10-23 January inclusive) will be provided via Online Learning (OL) to all students and student arrivals will be phased in or sequenced where possible. **Detailed instructions for OL will be provided by the Director of Learning no later than early January, including the rescheduling of Block Exams.** Home Stay and international students are to arrive as originally planned. International student arrivals are naturally sequenced as they will have to wait for test results. For Canadian students and international student guests of Canadian student families, if your flight or travel plans can be delayed until 22-23 January without airfare penalties or additional cost, it is strongly recommended you remain at home (or remain as a guest) and not return until 22 or 23 January.

During the Omicron outbreak, phasing in student arrivals in January accomplishes a number of health, safety and program delivery objectives and is in line with measures being taken by other UWCs and Independent School Association of BC (ISABC) schools. It allows the College to perform rapid antigen tests on all students to confirm negative/positive status and to oversee isolation protocols for each House for the first 2-3 weeks on campus, thereby minimizing the possibility of an outbreak and allowing students to continue their program on campus and eventually transition back to normal activities. The

College has sufficient antigen test kits for Home Stay students in the first week and is anticipating the arrival of hundreds of additional test kits in early January to continue regular testing for all students as recommended by health authorities, as well as testing for staff, faculty and residents, pending the availability of test kits.

(1) Home Stay with Host Families

All students with Host Families will complete their home stay as planned. Shortly after their return to campus, they will be administered a rapid antigen test by the Health Centre (detailed instructions to follow). Each test takes approximately 15 minutes. Students with a negative test result will be isolated in their assigned room/House until 23 January or possibly longer, pending circumstances on campus and/or changes to Public Health orders. Meals and activity periods outdoors will be scheduled and supervised for each House. All students will be taught via Online Learning (OL) from 10-23 January inclusive. Should a student test positive, they will be assessed by the Health Centre and may be required to isolate and be supported separately on campus.

(2) Return - International Air Travel (Fully Vaccinated)

As per the previous update, **temporary border restrictions and measures to address the COVID-19 Omicron variant of concern** were implemented by the Government of Canada and apply to all **fully vaccinated travellers** who have been in any country other than Canada and the United States in the 14 days prior to entry to Canada. **Fully vaccinated travellers who are selected for arrival testing must quarantine in a suitable place until they receive a negative test result. While the Government of Canada has not yet increased the number of fully vaccinated travellers being selected for testing to be at 100%, it is anticipated this requirement will be in place soon. All students are to assume they will be tested on arrival.** The Canadian government is covering all costs associated with arrival PCR testing.

Please **[COMPLETE your RETURN TO CAMPUS - TRAVEL SURVEY](#)**, so the College can plan for your arrival on campus. You are to submit your survey **NO LATER THAN 30 DECEMBER 2021**. Returning international students (except students from the U.S.) will be required to quarantine at the College's pre-arranged quarantine facility (Hotel Grand Pacific), where chaperone and other student support will be provided until negative test results are received. **PLEASE MAKE YOUR HOTEL BOOKING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (see contact # below)**. The hotel is your quarantine plan, which is a requirement for entry into Canada. Students remain responsible for transportation from the airport to the hotel and the cost of their room and meals while in isolation. The College will provide a once/day shuttle at a pre-arranged time (after "check out") from the hotel to the College. **Separate travel arrangements from the hotel to campus are no longer permitted** – students must use the daily shuttle provided by the College. Refer to the Canadian government website **[ARRIVECAN](#)** and download the **ARRIVECAN app** for up-to-date and detailed information on entering Canada from abroad.

Return From International Destinations Example (Except from U.S.): Once a fully vaccinated student arrives at a Canadian airport from a non-U.S. foreign destination, they will either be swabbed by a public health nurse or get a take-home test. The student must then self-isolate at their designated quarantine destination (Hotel Grand Pacific) while they await the results of the test. It may take up to three days to get a result. If the student gets a negative result, they are free to leave self-isolation and return to the

College. If the test is positive, they must stay in quarantine for **10 days**. If a student has a connecting flight to Victoria from their first Canadian airport arrival location, they will get swabbed or collect a take-home test and then continue to their final destination. If, for example, an inbound student from Europe arrives in Vancouver to catch a connecting flight to Victoria, that student would get tested or pick up their at-home test in Vancouver before proceeding to the connecting flight. That student would then have to self-isolate in Victoria at the Hotel Grand Pacific while they await the results of the test.

Return From the United States (Fully Vaccinated)

You **must** take the arrival test as directed on the day you enter Canada. The test may be administered at the airport or you may receive a self-swab kit at the airport or land border to complete within 24 hours after entering Canada. You do not have to wait for the results and can travel on to your final destination, including taking connecting flights. You do not have to quarantine while waiting for your results and are not required to pay a fee for the arrival PCR test.

All International Students – Return to Campus

On return to the College, international students who have been PCR tested twice will be administered a rapid antigen test by the Health Centre after spending a period of time on campus (Health Centre will provide detailed instructions), pending test kit availability. Students with a negative test result will remain in their assigned room/House under isolation until 23 January or possibly longer, pending circumstances on campus and/or changes to Public Health orders. Meals and activity periods outdoors will be scheduled and supervised for each House. All students will be taught via Online Learning (OL) from 10-23 January inclusive. Should a student test positive, they will be assessed by the Health Centre and may be required to isolate and be supported separately on campus.

(3) Canadian Students (International student guests) – Return Domestic Travel (Fully Vaccinated)

As noted above, if you can rebook your air travel or rearrange travel plans without penalty or additional cost, it is recommended you delay your arrival on campus until 22 or 23 January. Delaying your return will help us manage our support services and will benefit all students. As Online Learning will be in place for everyone and on campus students will be restricted to their houses for at least two weeks, we hope families will appreciate that staying at home for this period will not be problematic for those students who can do this.

To board your train or flight for travel to Canadian destinations, you must:

- be fully vaccinated with [accepted vaccines](#)
- be ready at any point in your journey to show your [official proof of vaccination](#)
- have received your second dose at least 14 full days prior to the day you travel
- have no signs or symptoms of COVID-19
- wear a mask

A COVID-19 test is not needed to board a flight or train in Canada unless you're flying to a country that requires it. If you fail to provide proof of vaccination (or valid COVID-19 test result if you have an exemption from your carrier), you won't be allowed to travel and could face penalties or fines. As of November 30, 2021, vaccination is required for travel within and to depart Canada. A valid COVID-19 molecular test will no longer be accepted as an alternative to vaccination unless you're eligible for one of the limited exemptions.

Canadian Students (and international student guests of Canadian student families) Return to Campus

On return to campus, Canadian students and International student guests of Canadian students will be administered a rapid antigen test by the Health Centre (detailed instructions to follow), pending test kit availability. Students with a negative test result will remain in their assigned room/House under isolation, pending circumstances on campus and/or changes to Public Health orders. By 23 January, the College will reassess House isolation requirements for all students and provide direction/guidance from 24 January onward. For the period of isolation, meals and activity periods outdoors will be scheduled and supervised for each House. All students will be taught via Online Learning (OL) from 10-23 January inclusive. Should a student test positive, they will be assessed by the Health Centre and may be required to isolate and be supported separately on campus.

Academic Work

Online Learning details for 10-23 January will be promulgated by the Director of Learning no later than early January, including the re-scheduling of Block Exams and other student support.

Contacts

College - Please continue to monitor changing conditions in Canada and elsewhere that could affect your travel plans. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding home stay, testing, return travel or academic support, please do not hesitate to contact Deanna Cuthbert, Operations Manager at dcuthbert@pearsoncollege.ca, who will respond to your query or re-direct you to someone who will assist you.

Hotel Grand Pacific – For booking, **please contact the Hotel Grand Pacific by phone (International Toll Free Number 1-800-663-7550)** and let them know you are part of the **Pearson College Group**. Students/families are responsible to make bookings as part of your quarantine plan as required by the Government of Canada. Full financial aid students are to contact Deanna for hotel bookings. Your first meal at the hotel will be dinner at 1800 on your arrival day, so you may want to plan for snacks if your hotel arrival is early.

PEARSON COLLEGE



On behalf of everyone at Pearson College UWC, continue to do what you are doing to enjoy your Winter Break and stay safe and healthy. We are doing our best to adjust our planning and support to ensure you can continue your education and experiential learning at Pearson with minimal disruption. Your patience and understanding are very much appreciated.

Continued best wishes,

A handwritten signature in dark blue ink, appearing to read "Craig Davis".

Craig Davis
President and Head of College