1. **What is a face covering?**
A face covering is a cloth or other type of material that covers an individual’s mouth and nose. The CDC lists five criteria for “cloth face coverings,” which should:

- Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- Be secured with ties or ear loops
- Include multiple layers of fabric
- Allow for breathing without restriction
- If not disposable, then be able to be laundered and machine-dried without damage or change to shape.

2. **What is the purpose of the face covering?**
Wearing a face covering is about protecting others and our community. Those with COVID-19, even those who do not know they have COVID-19, naturally expel droplets contaminated with the virus that causes COVID-19 when breathing, talking, sneezing, coughing, etc. Wearing a face covering in public shows you care enough to protect others. Additionally, limiting virus spread allows the campus to resume some normal operations, including face-to-face classes without the need to return to full remote instruction.

3. **What is a public area?**
A public area is any indoor space other than your own private office, residence (including residence hall room or apartment) or personal vehicle. Public areas include lobbies, restrooms, cafeterias, classrooms, hallways, stairwells, common spaces of residence halls, conference rooms, and break rooms. Face coverings should be worn in indoor public areas, even if you are by yourself, or any outdoor space where 6 feet of physical distancing is difficult to be reliably maintained.

4. **Who will provide face coverings to faculty and staff, students, visitors, or contractors?**
It is the responsibility of the individual to provide their own face covering. However, each department may keep a small amount of disposable face coverings on hand.

5. **Are there other options for face coverings besides a cloth mask?**
There are a variety of cloth face coverings available that you can find online or you can make your own following the CDC guidelines. The CDC recommends at least two layers of tightly knit cotton or the more detailed Olson design. In some cases, the use of a face shield may be appropriate.

6. **Do I wear a face covering while eating or drinking?**
No, you do not need to wear a face covering while eating or drinking. After removing your face
covering for eating, place the face covering into a bag to help keep the material clean and away from other people and items in your proximity. As soon as your meal is complete, wash your hands or clean your hands with hand sanitizer and replace your face covering, then clean your hands again.

7. **Am I required to wear a face covering while in my on-campus room or apartment?**
   Face coverings are not required when students are in their personal on-campus residence hall rooms/suites or apartments (including private and suite-style bathrooms). You should apply the same thought process that you used while living at home with your family. When you and your roommate first come together at the start of the semester, you should have a discussion around face covering expectations.

8. **Do I need to wear a face covering in the hallways and other areas of my residence hall?**
   Face coverings are required when students and visitors are in residence hall/apartment hallways or while visiting other students’ rooms/apartments. Face coverings are also required while in common areas and community bathrooms, except for while showering or engaging in personal hygiene activities. If residents have sinks in their rooms, then they should perform activities that require touching of the face (brushing teeth, washing face, etc.) at those sinks instead of at the sinks in the community bathrooms.

9. **Are face coverings required while riding a bus?**
   Yes, face coverings must be worn while riding a bus, even if no one else is on the bus, to decrease respiratory secretions on surfaces within the bus. Contaminated surfaces may still be a source of infection, so it is advisable to wash your hands or use hand sanitizer after exiting the bus.

10. **Are face coverings required while operating a university vehicle?**
    Yes, face coverings must be worn in a shared vehicle, even if no one else is in the vehicle, to decrease respiratory secretions on surfaces within the vehicle. Contaminated surfaces may still be a source of infection after you have left. If the vehicle is assigned to a single employee, and that person is alone in the vehicle, a face covering does not need to be worn.

11. **Are face coverings required in work areas that are separated by cubicle walls or partitions?**
    Face coverings must be worn in any public area, even if you are in your own workspace. However, a workspace is not in a public area when it allows for reliably maintaining a physical distance of 6 feet from others and includes a physical barrier between other workspaces. In these areas, a face covering is highly recommended but not required.

12. **If I have already had COVID-19, do I have to wear a face covering?**
    Yes. Scientific understanding of COVID-19 is still evolving, and currently it is not known if those who have had the disease can be re-infected and become contagious again.

13. **What if I encounter a scenario that is not clear on if I should wear a face covering?**
    You should use your own knowledge and select the option that best protects and comforts those around you. A good standard to follow is to wear a face covering in public settings, especially where social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.
14. **Can a person request an exemption from the requirement to wear a face covering?**

Exceptions may be made for those individuals who, due to a specific medical condition, cannot wear a face covering and have received an accommodation. Requests for an exception due a medical condition for students will be handled by the [Accessibility Support Center](#) and requests for employees will be handled by [Human Resources](#).

15. **How will the University ensure compliance with the face covering directive?**

Compliance with the face covering directive will be handled like any other University policy, standard, or guideline. The person refusing or failing to comply with the face covering directive may be subject to disciplinary action.

16. **How will the face covering directive be implemented in the classroom?**

Instructors of record will ensure compliance with the face covering directive unless an exemption has been granted by the Accessibility Support Center. First, students will be notified through their courses’ syllabi and provided with standard language of the University’s requirement to wear face coverings. If a student attends the in-person component of a class without a face covering, then the instructor of record should ask the student to put on a face covering with positive coaching or to leave the classroom if the student does not wish to wear a face covering. If the student refuses to comply, the instructor of record can end the class meeting to avoid putting the instructor of record and other students at risk. The instructor of record should report non-compliant students to the Dean of Students by submitting an [Incident Reporting Form](#).

17. **How will the face covering directive be implemented for faculty?**

Faculty not complying with the face covering directive will receive positive coaching and, if that fails, disciplinary action will be initiated following the procedures outlined by the [Faculty Handbook](#), Section 8.6 Faculty Discipline Procedures and Section 9.1 Faculty Grievance Policy.

18. **How will the face covering directive be implemented for staff?**

Staff not complying with the face covering directive will receive positive coaching and, if that fails, disciplinary action will be initiated following the procedures outlined by the policy governing discipline and dismissal of staff employees.

19. **How should I raise a concern about someone not adhering to the face covering requirement?**

Please contact the faculty or staff member who is supervising the person or the space where the infraction occurred. The department head or building leadership will be in a position to ascertain whether the person has an exemption and, if not, politely direct the person to wear a face covering or vacate the public area.

20. **Can students or employees be directed to vacate University property by a supervisor if they refuse to wear a face covering?**

Yes, unless they have received an exemption or the area or position has been granted a waiver from the face coverings policy. If individuals are not wearing a face covering in a public area, then the first response should be a collegial reminder and an offer of a clean face covering, if one is available. If the individual refuses to wear a face covering, a supervisor (for students this could be a faculty
member or a staff member overseeing the area) may direct the individual to leave the public area.

21. **If I have a student in my class who is deaf or hard of hearing, should I wear a face covering?**

For students who are deaf or hard of hearing, opaque face coverings can be a hindrance to communication either due to lack of ability to read lips or difficulties using a sign language interpreter. Faculty are encouraged to work with [Accessibility Support Center](#) to determine appropriate accommodations (e.g., wearing a face shield or a transparent face covering to accommodate students relying on lip reading). For classes using sign language interpreters, interpreters will either wear a face shield or provide remote interpreting.

22. **Are there limits to the design of the face covering?**

The policy on [Freedom of Expression (SAM 01.D.15)](#) states: “Activities that are unlawful or that materially and substantially disrupt the normal operations of the university’s campus are prohibited.”

23. **What is a quality face covering?**

It is important that your face mask meets standards set by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). A quality face covering will:

- Have at least two layers of material
- Utilize at least one layer of a tightly woven material, such as:
  - Nylon, Canvas, or Cotton (200+ thread count)
  - Silk or synthetic silk (100% polyester, tight weave, not very stretchable)
  - Chiffon (90% polyester, 10% spandex)
  - Spandex (52% nylon, 39% polyester, 9% spandex)
- Cover the nose and mouth completely
- Fit snug against the sides of the face and chin with no gaps
- Be secured with ties or elastic to prevent slipping
- Not make it difficult to breathe