

# Monday Message

Dec. 6, 2021



## President's Message

Dear all,

The pandemic long game continues; and this message is a bit long. Thank you in advance for reading on...

First, yes, at this time we are continuing to move forward with the mask-optional protocol plan beginning Jan. 3, inclusive of testing continuing through January to monitor on-boarding the spring semester. If we suffer spikes in cases and/or our various metrics (e.g., Public Health data, city wastewater analysis, healthcare/facility impact, infection and vaccination rates, CDC guidelines) indicate otherwise, we will re-impose our more broadly required masking protocol.

In terms of classrooms, required masking will be at the discretion of the faculty member. Students will be expected to bring their masks and comply. Communications to students will go out over the break and will be repeated frequently throughout the semester. Faculty may choose to add the definition of mask-optional to their syllabi. This is not a requirement. It is an option.

By moving forward with a mask-optional protocol, there may be changes to some of our responses when we learn of a positive COVID case. Our risk factors have changed. We know, for example, that people who are vaccinated and wear masks have lower risks of infection than those who are not vaccinated and do not wear masks. So, the protocols for exposure and/or close contact with someone who is infected are more fluid. We know also that all of us in the course of our daily lives have probably been exposed to the virus by now. Health officials remind us that every trip to the grocery store or a restaurant likely has put the virus in front of us.

In terms of campus events and/or gatherings, as much as weather allows, we will continue to encourage outside and/or use of large air volume spaces. In terms of food availability and consumption, I refer you to our protocol for [catering at campus events](#). It is permissible to serve food at campus-sponsored events as long as current health department protocols are followed. These protocols are reflected in our current campus guidelines.

As always, our COVID Tactical Team, under the leadership of Sr. VP Andy Hanson, will continue to work with Public Health to monitor and as needed refine our procedures. Thank you, Tactical Team, your tireless work and commitment are noticed and very much appreciated.

Second, while I have said it before, given the persistence of the pandemic-related realities we are living, it bears repeating -- as long as there remain viable hosts to infect (non-vaccinated individuals present as especially viable hosts) the virus will continue to mutate and mutate in ways that are increasingly of concern. The coronavirus has mutated thousands of times already, but not all mutation variations rise to a level of WHO designated "concern". The main triggers for that distinction are: transmissibility, potential to evade immune response, and how sick individuals may become (note: it is contrary to evolutionary viability for a variant to become so deadly it kills all potential hosts).

LC State's documented employee vaccination rate is just over 71%. As you know, when we implemented our weekly testing protocol, employees could/can opt-out of weekly testing by showing their vaccination card at HR, or applying for and being granted a medical or religious exemption. If we add in the exemptions, overall we account for over 77% of employees. Well done and thank you. As has been shared, the various federal vaccine mandates (regardless of where and when the various court cases

land) do not – at this time – apply to LC (We don't have contracts that meet the threshold, the OSHA 100 employee trigger doesn't apply to us as a public institution, the Medicare/Medicaid provider trigger – while yes, impacting our nursing clinical placements, does not trigger a campus-wide mandate even though we contract student health through SJRMC). All that said, we are well positioned if a mandate becomes applicable at some point in the future.

- The way out of the pandemic for us, for Idaho, for the world, is vaccination (this is not opinion, not a reiteration of a social media post, nor a political position, it is a research-based/science-grounded reality), so if you can, please get vaccinated and get boosted—we all want this roller coaster to end.
- None of us enjoy the majority of the ways the pandemic has changed our lives, and I imagine few like wearing face-coverings – myself included. This is important to remember. Recently, a comment was shared about how moving to a mask-optional status was a welcome gift. I was struck by that perception because it isn't at all how I view it. The gift has been and remains the consumption, assimilation and meaning-making triangulation of the mountain of ever growing and changing information used to ascertain and guide decisions, knowing that as we learn more, what we know and how we respond will continue to evolve (that is what the scientific method is really all about). The various protocols we have enacted and endured have been and will continue to be science-driven (weighing factors associated with physical, social and emotional health, wellbeing and risk) with the goal being to deliver and maintain a live, in-person, high quality education experience.
- There is no “going back” to an old way of being. **The world has changed.** We need to, and will continue to carefully and responsibly adapt, grow, change and persist. We will leverage technology to improve and increase education access. We will continue serving our students, our community, our state and nation; and delivering on our education mission – a mission that could not be more relevant – helping individuals become successful leaders, engaged citizens and lifelong leaders. We are and will continue as a beacon of health and hope.

Cynthia Pemberton, Ed.D.  
President

---

## Events

- **Dec. 7 – Tuesday at Two** – President Pemberton's Tuesdays at Two continue through Zoom (<https://lcsc.zoom.us/j/861031866>). All are welcome to join the conversation. **This will be the last Tuesday at Two of the semester.** Plan rejoin the conversation in January.
  - **Dec. 10 – Winter Revels** – Rain, snow or shine, Friday, Dec. 10, from 3-5 p.m. the campus community is invited to the fountain plaza for a protocol compliant winter “revels” celebration: “Here we go a caroling...” Hot chocolate and hot cider will be served along with holiday cookie treats. Songbooks will be provided. Dress appropriately.
- 

## Announcements

- **Coronavirus Updates & Risk Level:** For the latest coronavirus updates and information visit [www.lcsc.edu/coronavirus](http://www.lcsc.edu/coronavirus). In accordance with its [Operational Levels Matrix](#), LC State's current risk level is: Moderate.
  - **Cases Update:** Currently there are **2** active cases and **0** students in isolation in campus housing.

- **Vaccine Availability:** To schedule an appointment with Public Health - Idaho North Central District visit [www.idahoprepmo.com](http://www.idahoprepmo.com) or call 208-799-3100.
- **Seeding Our Tomorrows:** On Friday, President Pemberton visited Grangeville High School and spoke with students about some of the great opportunities at Lewis-Clark State College (photo below). It was the fourth of five visits to area high schools this semester for President Pemberton as she visits schools that are a part of LC State's Clearwater Valley TRIO Talent Search Program. The federally funded program, which [received grant funding for another five years](#) in August, focuses on students whose families are on a limited income and whose parents did not graduate with a four-year college degree. The program targets educationally talented students who have the desire to seek post high school education. It currently serves 592 students in grades 6-12 in Grangeville, Kamiah, Kooskia, Orofino, and Pierce/Weippe.



- **Trees, Trees, Trees:** As a designated Tree Campus Higher Education and a registered arboretum with ArbNet, LC's Arboretum committee is charged with caring for and monitoring the health and safety of our trees and campus community. A multi-month comprehensive review of LC's trees has been completed; and sadly what has been learned is that a number of our campus trees are diseased to an extent, given their age and current condition, that they will have to be removed. A carefully mapped out plan for tree removal and replanting will commence beginning with the removal of six trees along the perimeter of the Library Lawn and along the side of the President's residence. Three elm trees located along the perimeter of the library lawn are infested with Elm beetles; and due to the advanced age of these trees and already deteriorated health, removal of the trees is the best option to eliminate the pest as well as protect the health of our entire tree population. The three maple trees along 8th Ave. by the President's house also need to be removed. These trees have repeatedly dropped branches, and due to the advanced age and location pose a hazard risk to parked cars and people on the sidewalk. Removal will occur during the winter break (Dec. 27-30) to allow for the least disruption to campus operations.

The Arboretum Committee plans to replace these trees with one tree planted for each tree removed. The trees along the roadway near the President's house will be replaced with three hardy, street trees in the same general area. The elm trees hold a special place at LC State, as these trees are the namesake of our annual "Art Under the Elms" event as part of the Dogwood Festival. The removed Elm trees will be replaced with a hardier elm cultivar that is pest resistant and Dutch Elm Disease resistant. These three trees may not be planted exactly in the same location as the removed trees but will have a location determined in coordination with our campus master plan. By carefully managing our arboretum, we are seeding a healthier tomorrow.

- **Purchasing:** Purchasing/Administrative Services has reorganized to provide better customer service. Purchasing now has three personnel with the ability to assist with bids \$10,000 and over. To help streamline these requests, please enter a requisition ("Solicitation" as vendor) and then go to the [Purchasing website](#) and review "\$10,000+: How do I place an order?" for further information. At the start of this new process, you will be assigned one of three buyers to assist. Additionally, MCD (mobile communication devices aka cell phones) agreements are streamlined and this process now starts with the division/department entering a requisition, then sending the MCD agreement to [purch@lcsc.edu](mailto:purch@lcsc.edu).
- **Student Course Evaluations** (SCEs) are now available for students to complete ([see calendar](#)). Please encourage students to check their LC State email for further instructions on how to complete SCEs. SCEs will close on Dec. 10.
- **Campus Song for the Week:** ["The Chipmunk Song \(Christmas Don't Be Late\)"](#)
- **HR Updates:**
  - [December Newsletter](#) | [Weekly PDT/Wellness Schedule](#)
  - [Snowing Kindness in the Admin Building](#)
  - November WOW Award Winner: Ed Holthaus
  - [LC Cares Needs Donations](#)
  - Performance Evaluations are due Jan. 31
- **Dr. Grace Anderson**, director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, will advance her position as vice president for **Institutional Research, Effectiveness and Planning** beginning January 2022. Dr. Anderson has distinguished herself in her director role providing leadership and hands-on production outcomes associated with strategic planning and implementation, accreditation, strategic enrollment management, program review and prioritization processes, and a broad range of survey research initiatives; as well as assuming oversight responsibilities for Grants and Contracts in 2019. Dr. Anderson's expanded leadership responsibilities will include executive support for research-derived legislative preparation, State of Idaho, SBOE and OSBE data reports, compilation and uses; representation on behalf of LC State on the Idaho SBOE's Higher Education Research Council (HERC); and in coordination with IT, college-level data documentation and use, including but not limited to development and maintenance of the institutional data dictionary and standardized data reporting across college offices and units.

Dr. Anderson completed her Ph.D. in communication in 2011 and has worked in higher education since 2005. Dr. Anderson's career path leading to LC State includes a graduate teaching assistantship for the University of California at Santa Barbara, a peer reviewer, assistant professor and social science researcher at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama; and instructor and institutional researcher at Great Falls College - Montana State University. We are excited to have Dr. Anderson assume this next level leadership role!
- **Staff (CSO & PSO) Evaluations:** The new CSO and PSO evaluation forms have been posted to the [HR website](#), along with an [instructional video](#) and more details.
  - This year, **the employee begins the process** by completing sections I, II, and III of the Non-Supervisory or Supervisory Performance Evaluation and forwards it to their



immediate supervisor, who will complete the remainder of the evaluation. **This step should be completed by Dec. 15.**

- Please review the employee's **job description** during this process. If the job duties have changed, update the job description and email a copy to [hr@lcsc.edu](mailto:hr@lcsc.edu).
  - All staff performance evaluations are **due Jan. 31, 2022**.
  - All employees should have received an email from **BambooHR** on Tuesday, Nov. 9, requesting that they create an account. This email is NOT SPAM. Employees will be able to open BambooHR to review their job description and view past self-evaluations and performance evaluations. Please take a few minutes to create your BambooHR account and browse around in your profile.
  - For questions regarding the staff performance evaluation process or timelines, please contact HRS at x2269.
- **Faculty Evaluations:** The Faculty Job Description / Annual Performance Review forms have been posted, along with more information, to the [Academic Affairs](#) website.
    - Each calendar year a Job Description will be developed for all instructional and library faculty members.
    - Before March 1, the division chair or director will meet with the faculty member to negotiate the Job Description for the calendar year (spring semester of the current academic year and the fall semester of the following academic year).
    - By March 1, the signed Job Description must be submitted for approval to the dean. The approved Job Description will be returned to the division/library and kept on file for use in completing the annual performance review.
    - All instructional personnel will be confidentially evaluated annually on assigned duties as established by the current year's Job Description.
    - Performance Reviews shall be conducted by the division chair/director.
    - For non-tenured faculty, the division chair/director must include with the evaluation a recommendation regarding continued employment.
    - For faculty evaluation timelines see [Policy 2.112](#).
    - For questions regarding the faculty evaluation process or timelines, please contact the Academic Affairs office at x2213.

