Technology / Operations/ Logistics/ Steering Committee

Report / Recommendations

Steering Committee Members:

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The following report provides preliminary recommendations for CSCU Fall 2020 reopening plans as they relate specifically to Technology/Operations and Logistics. The recommendations closely follow guidelines established by both the CDC as well as those endorsed within the Governor's ReOpen CT plan. The report provides supplemental documents for campuses to utilize as part of their reopening efforts. The first document contains a summary of technological needs and assessments based on learnings gleaned from the unprecedented experience of this past semester as well as additional needs specified by each campus. The second document is a Facilities / Operations summary based on feedback, challenges and needs identified by each campus. Taken in total, this report in addition to its four supplemental documents are intended to guide campuses in the reopening process with a primary focus on the safety of all students, faculty and staff members.

1. Safety Recommendations

    a. CDC Guidelines for "Colleges, Universities & Higher Education -

       https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-

       universities/index.html

    b. Modified Normal Office Hours for staff to stagger schedules – meet with public /

       students by appointment. Each office should be locked and will only be accessible by

       knocking or using a doorbell / buzzer if available.

    c. Stagger class start and end times / creative scheduling allowing for time to arrive and

       depart not in large crowds.

    d. Make sure classrooms are open before class start time so groups of students are not

       waiting in the hallways for a classroom to be opened.

    e. Recommend alternate class end times / creative scheduling allowing for time to

       disinfecting spaces between classes.

f. Clearly label areas that will require individuals to stand in line to assure social distancing of at least 6 feet.

g. Limit Building Access

h. Food Service

    i. Recommend grab-and-go items

    ii. Commissary food service options

    iii. Disposable utensils only

    iv. Follow all CDC guidelines for disinfecting and safety measures

    v. Online ordering options and payment

i. Decreasing furniture density (projected 30%-40% of current capacity)

    i. Examples of typical classroom COVID-19 furniture layout options can be located at:

https://www.ct.edu/files/pdfs/COVID-19_Classroom_Furniture_Layout_Examples.pdf

    ii. Remove seats and place in storage

    iii. Seating campus wide (study areas / common areas) remove / space out

    iv. Maintain 6' minimum social distance with seating

j. Plexiglas Barriers

    i. Each campus should identify their areas / needs, front facing student positions

    ii. Provide Plexiglas dividers at lab benches to reduce social spacing

    iii. The System Office Facilities Group can be a resource as needed by each campus

k. Medical Emergencies
    i. The campus crisis team needs to be trained/retrained for correct response measures during the Covid-19 pandemic.

l. Union Concerns:

      i.   Should be addressed to the Dir of Labor Relations, Chris Henderson through the Union president to ensure clear communication and consistent resolution.

2. <u>PPE & Health Monitoring:</u>

    a. All faculty, staff and students must wear face coverings / masks per CDC guidelines

    b. All campuses were asked to review needs and coordinate with System Office purchasing as a collective effort

    c. Arrival of PPE – lead times- System office procurement working on

    d. CDC Guidelines – face shields, masks, gloves, hand washing

        i. Considerations for Institutes of Higher Education
        https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/considerations.html

    e. Health Monitoring:

        i. The monitoring of those on campus should mainly include self-monitoring. As per the Reopen CT plan, if employees or students experience coughing, shortness of breath, and two of these symptoms: fever, chills, shaking, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, and loss of taste or smell, the individual should not enter the campus. If the employee was on campus, they should contact their immediate supervisor upon arrival at home. If the student was on campus, they should contact their professor via email upon arrival at home. See EEOC's Pandemic Preparedness in the Workplace and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

3. <u>Containment of Spread and Notices:</u>

    a. **Student illness:** Faculty should maintain record of student attendance on each day of class in order to provide manual contact tracing if an individual becomes ill. Student email and phone numbers should be updated on the first day of the return to campus. Upon notification of a COVID-19 infection, management will be notified, and those that encountered the individual will be asked to quarantine for 14 days.

        i. **Notice:** Under the Clery Act, there is a duty to issue emergency notifications in the context of an infectious disease within the Clery geography. The Clery Handbook (pg. 6-2) requires Emergency Notifications for dangerous conditions on campus and gives the following specific example "outbreak of meningitis, norovirus or other serious illness." The Clery Act has the flexibility to alert only the segment of the campus that a

college determines to be at risk. If a college opts to notify a subset of the campus community, the college needs to engage in manual contact tracing of the student or employee's contacts (without identifying the infected individual) in the two weeks prior to being symptomatic and all times since in collaboration with local departments of public health.

b. **Employee illness:** If an employee becomes ill, he or she needs to contact his or her immediate supervisor as soon as possible. That supervisor will notify all individuals that were in contact with the ill employee. Offices should have a log of the employees that work each day and travel in and out of the offices.

   i. **Notice:** In addition to Clery Act, under OSHA, employers have a duty to provide necessary and accurate information concerning workplace safety to employees and to exercise care to furnish a workplace free from hazards that are likely to cause death or serious physical harm. CSCU institutions must notify workers who have been in close contact with an infected employee and direct them to quarantine or self-isolate and notify others in the general work area/department that there has been a case, what measures were taken, and that they were identified as a person in close contact with the infected individual - all without identifying the infected employee to protect privacy and confidentiality. See OSHA's guidance.

c. **Confirmed case of COVID-19:** If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 on campus, or a campus identifies someone who was on campus, we need to have a protocol in place to immediately notify local health officials. CSCU has not received final guidance from the Governor or DPH regarding the process for notifying local public health officials. State health officials should help administrators determine a course of action for the College. Administrators should work closely with the local health officials to determine if a short-term closure (for 2-5 days) of all campus buildings and facilities is needed. In some cases, we may only need to close buildings and facilities that had been entered by the individual(s) with COVID-19.

4. Contact tracing protocol

   i. **Manual contact tracing:** CSCU institutions are obligated to manually contact trace under OSHA regulations and the Clery Act and provide notice to its campus communities and the health authorities.

   ii. **Digital contact tracing:** Any *compulsory* digital contact tracing program would likely be problematic because CSCU institutions are State entities, and such a mandate would expose the State and CSCU to potential civil liberties and Constitutional challenges. Most likely a digital contact tracing program would need to be optional and based on informed and voluntary consent and require guidance and management by the State authorities. Whether a digital contact tracing program ought to be compulsory or optional is an essential question, but the more important consideration is ensuring maximization of public uptake.

If the Governor or public health authorities determine to employ some form data-aggregating contact tracing (compulsory or optional) within the ContaCT program, such a program must have safeguards to protect against abuse, because it is important in itself and because a failure to take such measures will reduce public uptake, public trust in our institutions and undermine the public health goals that justify such an effort in the first place.

Any such digital contact tracing program would need to have safeguards in place to protect against attacks by bad actors; informed voluntary participation so that individuals who opt-out are not denied access to CSCU spaces; and assurances that the technology will anonymize and prohibit re-identification of the collected data to protect individual privacy. To maximize citizen uptake and participation, additional contact tracing app program safeguards should include:

- **Sunset provision:** the program must have a firm end date and may allow the possibility of reenactment if the program is helpful and the health threat continues. Otherwise no such program should exist. Six months is a reasonable timeframe.

- **Opt-out option:** Individuals could be enrolled in contact tracing applications by default and given the ability to opt out. To maximize uptake, individuals choosing to opt-out should immediately be shown figures on how many people in their respective neighborhood or city are enrolled in the contact tracing program and the difference that collective participation can make in combating the pandemic.

- **Data deletion:** it must require that the data collected by the contact tracing app is expunged from the host device or any other storage device in an automatic and verifiable way after some specific period of time, say three weeks to a month, or only for so long as the data is plausibly useful toward supporting COVID-19 contact tracing.

- **Access limits**: prohibit data re-identification of aggregate data, any other use or exploitation of data by government or commercial entities, and limit access and use only for public health purposes related to COVID-19 contact tracing.

- **Real time auditing and reporting:** the use of data-collection app must include sufficient oversight, like the Inspector General, to be charged with the responsibility for auditing the functioning of the digital contract tracing program on an ongoing basis (monthly reports), with a requirement of detailed contemporaneous reporting including the CT State Legislature, Governor, CDC, and most notably our CSCU communities and the public.

5. Cleaning schedules / disinfecting

    a. The CT Department of Public health suggests the use of disinfectant wipes but when not

       available recommend using a 10% bleach solution OR a quaternary ammonium-based

disinfectant (which is probably already part of your custodial ordering supply chain) in a spray bottle that will allow students to "spray and leave" a disinfectant on the surfaces they use. [Note: use 10% bleach OR quaternary ammonium disinfectants. It is suggested that schools commit to having one or the other campus-wide because mixing those two compounds could be extremely hazardous.]

b. Unless specified otherwise by space type listed below or future modifications through CDC or CT guidelines, each space occupied during the colleges operational day shall be cleaned and disinfected no more than one time per day. If cleaning and disinfecting in a space is completed prior to end of the operational day the space shall be secured until the next operational day. Disinfecting is not limited to all touch points, desks, chairs and equipment.

c. Recommend availability of PPE for all building occupants

    i. Face masks (required)

    ii. Hand disinfectant

    iii. Gloves

    iv. Student/Faculty available cleaning/disinfectant supplies

d. Computer Labs

    i. Upon entering a computer lab, students must clean hands with hand sanitizer, and disinfect / wipe down their workstation area, keyboard and mouse with the equipment disinfectant supplies provided by the college.

    ii. After use and prior to leaving a computer lab, students must disinfect / wipe down their workstation area, keyboard and mouse with a disinfectant provided by the college and clean hands with hand sanitizer before leaving the lab.

iii. When using shared printers, scanners and other shared peripheral devices within a computer lab, students must disinfect / wipe down each device prior to use and after use with the disinfectant provided by the college.

iv. Custodial personnel must clean and disinfect all computer labs occupied / used nightly with approved disinfectants per the CDC or CT guidelines.

e. Manufacturing Labs

    i. Students must wear safety glasses, masks and gloves (where required). Machines and tools will be disinfected / wiped down with cleaning supplies (provided by the college) by the student after use. Students will rotate between stations while maintaining social distancing at all times. No less than one time per day custodial personnel will wipe down and disinfect all surfaces, doorknobs, touchpoints, desks and chairs.

f. Allied Health / Science Labs / classrooms

    i. Minimum, evening full cleaning of the rooms by custodial personnel with approved disinfectants per the CDC or CT guidelines. Wipe down of all surfaces, doorknobs, touchpoints, desks and chairs.

        i. Wipes (or spray and paper towels) should be available in all classrooms for cleaning of desks and equipment by students for their direct use.

        ii. Hand sanitizer, when available through the supply chain, should be available utilized upon entering and prior to exiting all rooms.

g. Restrooms

    i. Minimum, mid-day and evening cleaning and disinfecting of the bathrooms by custodial personnel with approved disinfectants per the CDC or state of CT.

    ii. Disinfectant in spray bottles left by sinks and toilet stalls for students and staff to spray and leave disinfectant on the surface.

    h.   Cafeterias / Food Service vendors:

        i.   Follow all CDC guidelines for disinfecting and safety measures

        ii.   Recommend grab-and-go items

        iii.   Minimize touch surface needs

        iv.   Disposable utensils only

        v.   Remove covers from trash bins

        vi.   Online ordering options and payment

    i.   Overnight full cleanings / disinfecting recommendations

        i.   The cleaning recommendation regime should include:

           i.   Minimum, mid-day and evening cleaning of the bathrooms by custodial personnel with approved disinfectants per the CDC or state of CT.
               a.   Verify as needed for restrooms that spray bottles with disinfectant for occupant use remain available.
           ii.   A morning, noon, and evening cleaning of all touch surfaces and doorknobs by custodial personnel with approved disinfectants per the CDC.
           iii.   Classrooms should be cleaned by an outside vendor (if needed as supplemental staff) or custodians on 3rd shift using approved CDC protocols.
           iv.   Wipes (or spray and paper towels) should be available in all classrooms for cleaning of desks and equipment between students.
           v.   Hand sanitizer should be utilized upon entering and prior to exiting all rooms.
           vi.   Cleaning crews should leave "sign off" evidence in rooms after cleaning is complete for occupant assurance.

    j.   Air Filters / HVAC Systems

        i.   Quarterly changing of filters or at more frequent intervals

        ii.   HVAC fan capacities and filter racks to be verified for use of MERV 13 – MERV 18 filters

        iii.   When feasible, in the evening after all classes are complete a building air purge should occur providing 2 air exchanges of fresh air.

6.   <u>Additional Security / Custodians</u>

a. Each campus should perform an assessment of cleaning needs and the appropriate staff to meet CDC guidelines for cleaning.

b. Security personnel should gently remind individuals to follow safety & distancing rules.

7. <u>Signage Packages & Communication Plan</u>

a. **Signage packages:** Floor arrows, traffic flows, standing in lines etc. Sign packages for campuses will be available for campuses to download and use local print vendors to produce signage aligned with each campus reopening plans.
   - *i. An electronic link to the CSCU COVID-19 print ready signage package is:*
     https://www.ct.edu/files/pdfs/Recommended_COVID-19_Wall_&_Floor_Signage.pdf

   i. In each building, the plan should include posting of signs. They should be placed:
      a. On the outside doors to alert students, faculty and staff to not enter the campus if they are experiencing symptoms as per the daily health check recommendations.
      b. On the outside doors to remind faculty, staff, and students to wear a facemask or cloth face covering that covers the nose and mouth.
      c. To designate the direction to walk. Example: A sign should be placed on the floor and on the wall to show clear instructions. Each major hallway should have traffic flow identified.
      d. To state the need of social distancing. Signage should be placed at multiple locations on the walls going down each hallway.
      e. Signs should be placed on each office door to knock (or ring if a doorbell is present) and not congregate in the hallways.
      f. Handwashing protocols should be available and posted in every bathroom.
      g. The back of each bathroom door should contain a log of the cleaning that has occurred.

b. **Communication plan:** Our institutions need to consider risk mitigation steps, be transparent and clearly communicate that each CSCU institution cannot possibly guarantee zero cases or prevent community infection, and that every single member of the community must contribute and do their part to assist COVID-19 mitigation efforts. Make it clear that everyone who comes on to our campuses understands and acknowledges that they must do their part to be safe, honor restrictions, follow CDC and CT state health authorities' guidelines, and adhere to the CSCU health and safety protocols.

   - Colleges should consider building information about each institution's COVID-19 mitigation efforts into communications to students and parents this fall, into employee handbooks, and into student handbooks.

- For reference purposes and supplemental continuity efforts the below link references key COVID-19 operations items reviewed by the universities and, until modified by new data can be looked at as best practice options.
  https://www.ct.edu/files/pdfs/Operations_Best_Practice_Options.pdf

- Make honoring all such efforts a condition of the code of conduct, particularly for students. Make it clear that keeping our communities as safe as possible is a shared responsibility, but make a failure to honor this responsibility grounds for discipline. Encouraging good and decent collective behavior is the preferred message, but having ramifications in place for non-compliance may be necessary.

Sample statement:

**STATEMENT OF SHARED RESPONSIBILITY AND
ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF UNIQUE CIRCUMSTANCES**

We are living in unique and uncertain times. None of us can know what the future holds for sure, but at (College/University), we know this – we are going to have a full (College/University) experience in fall 2020. We are working hard and are confident that whatever shape the academic and non-academic curriculum takes, it will be the excellent, collegial and productive experience that drew you to (College/University) in the first place. By returning to the campus of College/University and working or participating in its activities, you understand and acknowledge that:

- College/University holds as paramount the health, safety and welfare of every member of its community.

- None of us can guarantee what shape COVID-19 will take, and none of us – including College/University – can guarantee a COVID-19-free environment. This is simply not feasible. It would be disingenuous to suggest otherwise.

- Taking steps to minimize the risk of COVID-19 infections (or any other spread of disease) at College/University is a shared responsibility. Every member of our community – including you – must do their part. This means adhering to national, state, and local health guidelines and requirements, and adhering to those measures College/University deems safe and appropriate for its campus. This may include: social distancing, wearing masks or other facial coverings, using other PPE, not reporting to class or work if sick, and isolating and quarantining when required. You understand and agree to do all of this not just for yourself, but for the safety of others, and because this is consistent with the College/University employee or student code of conduct.

- In complete transparency, then, you understand that when you return to the physical campus of College/University, there is a risk you may contract COVID-19. College/University certainly does not wish this on anyone, and we are taking all recommended steps to mitigate this risk, but we cannot categorically guarantee this will not happen. By coming onto our

campus, please understand that this is possible.

- Finally, regardless of the learning environment for fall 2020, the tuition and fees will be (*as approved by the Board of Regents*)*.* The tuition and fees are in exchange for learning, academic credit, and certain non-academic services that will be provided whether on-ground, in a hybrid environment, or entirely remotely.

8. Privacy Requirements

   a. In process of developing a Chief Privacy Officer and privacy function throughout CSCU institutions that clearly describes what information we collect and use, for what purpose, with whom and why we share that information, and how long we retain it, i.e. our privacy practices and gives adequate notice regarding those practices.

   b. Need for additional security risk assessment resources to assess and address new or expanded risks from pandemic-related procurement and use of technology, data collection, use and sharing of personal information.

   c. **FERPA:** Subject to certain exceptions, FERPA requires the students' written consent for Colleges or Universities to share PII from students' education records. The US DOE issued "FERPA and Coronavirus Disease 2019" (the FAQ). US DOE confirmed that a College or University may disclose PII about a student whom the institution believes has COVID-19 to public health officials, within certain parameters. A school may also disclose the existence of a student who has tested positive for COVID-19 to faculty, students, and staff, to the extent that it can do so while maintaining the anonymity of the student. DOE requires Colleges or Universities to ensure that in releasing such facts, they do so in a manner that does not disclose other information that, alone or in combination, would allow a reasonable person in the community to identify the students who are absent due to COVID-19 with reasonable certainty.

      i. FERPA permits educational agencies and institutions to release information from education records *without* consent after the removal of all PII, provided that the College or University has made a reasonable determination that a student's identity is not personally identifiable, whether through single or multiple releases, and taking into account other reasonably available information. Thus, it would be problematic to disclose that every student in a particular class is absent if there is, for instance, a directory with the names of every student in that class.

      ii. Therefore, unless a specific FERPA exception applies, US DOE recommends for Colleges and Universities to prepare consent forms for eligible students (or parents) to permit the potential sharing of this type of information if they create, or intend to create, a tracking or monitoring system to identify an outbreak before an emergency is recognized.

iii. If the eligible student (or parent) will not provide written consent for the disclosure of the PII, then the College or University may *not* make the disclosure unless it has determined that there is an applicable exception to the general requirement of consent that permits the disclosure, such as if a health or safety emergency exists and the PII is disclosed to an appropriate party whose knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.

d. **HIPAA:** A College or University is not a "covered entity" under HIPAA *unless* a student health clinic provides health care services to the public.

9. Technology Needs

a. On-Ground Learning

i. The use of on-ground technology for academic tasks must comply with current CDC guidelines for Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), social distancing, recommended cleaning and disinfection schedules, and have the appropriate level of IT staff, reporting to the respective campus, to respond to on-ground learning support requests.

ii. To augment access to classroom lectures, due to social distancing requirements, the HyFlex Course Model is being considered to enable hybrid course delivery. The technology requirements to implement a HyFlex solution are under development.

iii. To avoid crowding of computer labs and lines forming in hallways, each campus should develop a scheduling process for students to schedule appointments for computer lab usage. Walk-ins should be discouraged.

iv. Because of PPE requirements, classroom communications may be negatively impacted. To mitigate this impact, instructors should use the Microsoft Teams Chat on the teachers' station and establish a chat session, allowing students to communicate with the instructor through messaging. Advanced training for instructors will be needed to use this technology to communicate effectively.

v. To ensure on-ground technology will meet the needs for on-ground learning, campuses should perform their normal assessment of IT equipment readiness and replace technology per their normal technology life-cycle replacement plan.

vi. If a campus chooses to re-purpose campus technology and deploy the technology to remote users, campus administration should be mindful of the

impact the technology drawdown will have on on-ground learning and working capacity.

    vii. The current 180-Day Password Change Policy will remain in place until further notice.

b. On-Ground Working

    i. The use of on-ground technology for normal work-related tasks must comply with current CDC guidelines for PPE, social distancing, recommended cleaning and disinfection schedules, and have the appropriate level of IT staff, reporting to the respective campus, to respond to on-ground work support requests.

    ii. If a campus chooses to re-purpose campus technology and deploy the technology for remote users, campus administration needs to be mindful of the impact the technology drawdown will have on on-ground learning and working capacity.

    iii. The current 180-Day Password Change Policy will remain in place until further notice.

c. Remote Learning

    i. Equipment for Students and Faculty

        i. Laptop computers can be either granted or loaned to students. Either option faces potential market supply shortages. Six (6) to eight (8) weeks lead time will be needed to deploy a laptop computing device. If funding allows, the recommendation is to permanently grant the equipment to students, using Follett as the procurement vehicle. Loaning equipment incurs significant overhead to prepare inventory, maintain inventory and provide remote user support, as such, granting technology for permanent use is preferred.

        ii. Chromebooks and tablets are computing devices with limited functional use and do not meet the minimum [Connecticut State College Personal Technology Guidelines](#) and are not recommended for <u>most</u> remote learning tasks. If a campus chooses to use Chromebooks and tablets, a four (4) to six (6) weeks lead-time will be needed to deploy a Chromebook or tablet computing device.

iii. Peripheral devices such as webcams and microphones may be needed by students and faculty working remotely with desktops. Six (6) weeks to eight (8) weeks lead-time will be needed to deploy peripheral devices to support synchronous remote learning activities.

iv. Specialized programs requiring high-end computers are expected to run on-ground. In the event of a campus closure, campuses may deploy these systems to students and/or faculty for remote learning. However, access to resources, such as licensing and support, may impede the deployment of equipment. *(See Remote Access to Software for Students)*

v. Each campus should have an adequate inventory of ready-state spare equipment to accommodate equipment failure events. It is recommended campuses hold one (1) equipment unit for every twenty-five (25) anticipated equipment units to be loaned to students and faculty.

ii. Remote Access to Software for Students and Faculty

i. A majority of software used by students and/or faculty is licensed for anywhere access, such as Microsoft O365. However, many specialized course software applications are licensed in manner only on-ground systems can access. Vendors for the specialized course software will have to be contacted to determine options for providing the respective software to students and faculty working remotely.

iii. Remote Helpdesk Support for Students or Faculty using Non-CSCU Equipment

i. Due to the variety and variances in technology equipment types and configurations used by students or faculty, remote support is beyond the capacity of campus IT support staff. Because of this, Office of Information Technology (OIT) recommends students and faculty rely on the equipment manufacturer/reseller to support their respective technology equipment issues.

iv. Remote Helpdesk Support for Students or Faculty using CSCU Equipment

i. Limited remote support for CSCU equipment should be provided by campus IT staff.

    v.   Internet Services for Students or Faculty

       i.   The [Connecticut Library Consortium](#) is the recommended means for campuses to access HotSpot/Internet resources for students and faculty in need. It is recommended Library staff at each campus coordinate the student and faculty needs of their campus, with the CLC HotSpot/Internet team.

      ii.   During the Spring semester, many internet service providers waived internet access fees for all customers. These waivers are due expire on June 30, 2020. System office staff are actively reaching out to governmental liaisons to these internet companies to extend this wavier for our students and faculty. If there is an agreement to extend these waivers, users will be notified accordingly.

   vi.   Virtual Desktop Infrastructure for Student or Faculty

       i.   Access to Virtual Desktop computing systems (VDI) is not a viable system-wide option for students or faculty currently. Only two campuses, Manchester and Three Rivers are capable of offering access to virtual desktops for students and/or faculty, but this requires the design and implementation of a Universal Access Gateway (UAG) system at 61 Woodland. The Office of Information Technology (OIT) is actively working on a project to develop a standard UAG design and a plan to implement this system to support VDI services. The timeline on this initiative is six (6) to twelve (12) months.

  vii.   Training Students for Online Learning Skills

       i.   To assist students to obtain online learning skills, it is recommended campus Academic Success Centers assist students with this need.

 viii.   Training Faculty for Online Teaching Skills

       i.   To assist faculty to obtain the requisite online teaching skills, the Center for Teaching will be coordinating training sessions for faculty as needed.

   ix.   Technology Guidelines for Students and Faculty

       i.   Students and faculty can find current technology guidelines defined within the [Connecticut State College Personal Technology Guidelines](#).

    x.   Smart Classroom Technology Equipment for Remote Use by Faculty

i. The need to provide smart classroom technology will need to be evaluated based on the success of the [HyFlex Course Model](#) solution. If the technology on each campus goes unused, then deploying this equipment could be an option, but campus IT staff will need to determine requirements for Microsoft Teams or WebEx integration. In addition, faculty using this equipment will have to be expert users with the ability to self-support any technical issues, since IT staff will be unable to support this technology remotely. The recommendation is not to deploy smart classroom technology for remote teaching.

xi. Video Conferencing Within Blackboard

i. To simplify the technology burden on students and faculty from negotiating multiple systems to access/utilize online teaching material and video conferencing sessions, our Blackboard system should be extended to include Blackboard Collaborate. Blackboard Collaborate provides virtual classroom solutions for online teaching and web conferencing needs within our learning management system. This option is currently not yet available and is being reviewed for implementation

xii. Proctoring and Browser Lockdown Software

i. The Remote Learning Crisis Team is currently reviewing the products available to meet these needs and will be recommending a single solution software platform for standardization for all campuses to use.

xiii. Virtual Reality/Augmented Reality Systems

i. Requests for Virtual Reality/Augmented Reality Systems should be coordinated with the Academic IT Steering team to review any initiatives for approval.

d. Remote Working

i. Equipment for Staff

i. Laptop computers can be loaned to staff for telework needs. If a campus does not have adequate on-hand inventory to meet the needs for telework, then the campus may face a potential market supply

shortages. Six (6) to eight (8) weeks lead time will be needed to deploy a laptop computing device.

 ii. Chromebooks and tablets are computing devices with limited functional use and do not meet the minimum [Connecticut State College Personal Technology Guidelines](#) and are not recommended for <u>most</u> remote working tasks. If a campus chooses to use Chromebooks and tablets, a four (4) to six (6) weeks lead-time will be needed to deploy a Chromebook or tablet computing device.

 iii. Peripheral devices such as webcams and microphones maybe needed by staff working remotely with desktops. Six (6) weeks to eight (8) weeks lead-time will be needed to deploy peripheral devices supporting synchronous remote learning activities.

 iv. The loaning of office equipment such as scanner and printers, should be discouraged, due to a propensity of protected data to exist outside the control of a CSCU authority. However, campuses should try to accommodate dual monitor configuration requests, if monitor inventory can fulfill the request and the requestor's personal computing device can support a dual configuration.

 v. Each campus should have an adequate inventory of ready-state spare equipment to accommodate equipment failure events. It is recommended campuses hold one (1) equipment unit for every twenty-five (25) anticipated equipment units to be loaned to staff.

ii. Cross-Department File Shares in Protective Enclave

 i. The ability to share files within the protective enclave currently exists. OIT recommends campus staff work with campus IT staff to configure protective enclave folders to enable this shared access.

iii. Internet Services for Staff

 i. The [Connecticut Library Consortium](#) is the recommended means for campuses to access HotSpot/Internet resources for staff in need. It is recommended the Library staff at each respective campus should coordinate staff needs of their campus, with the CLC HotSpot/Internet team.

      ii.   During the Spring semester, many internet service providers waived internet access fees for all customers. These waivers are due expire on June 30, 2020. System office staff are actively reaching out to governmental liaisons to these internet companies to extend this wavier for our staff. If there is an agreement to extend these waivers, users will be notified accordingly.

   iv. Training Staff for Teleworking

      i.   Training sessions for Microsoft Teams will be schedule throughout the summer and training material will be posted for on-demand viewing. Information on session schedules and material links will be distributed when it is available.

    v. Secured Portal for Digital Documents

      i.   System office staff are actively engaged with ScanOptics to provide a secured portal for uploading student services documents, directly into the protective enclave. This service should be active by July 1, 2020.

      ii.   ScanOptics services will be extended to accommodate faxes and processing physical mail. Dates for these additional services to be announced at a later date.

   vi. Technology Guidelines for Staff

      i.   Staff can find current technology guidelines posted under the [Connecticut State College Personal Technology Guidelines](#).

  vii. eSignatures

      i.   At this time, there are no services in place to support eSignatures.

 viii. Jabber Services

      i.   Jabber services are available for staff to extend their office phone services to their private phone while teleworking. Campus staff should work with campus IT staff to configure and use this service.

   ix. Remote Access to Enterprise Services

      i.   Many of the enterprise services are accessible via a web interface or through a RIS/RDP solution. Campus staff should work with campus IT staff to determine which solution is best for their respective needs.

e.   Virtual Desktop Infrastructure for Staff

      i.   Access to Virtual Desktop computing systems (VDI) is not a viable system-wide option for staff currently. Only two campuses, Manchester and Three Rivers are capable of offering access to virtual desktops for staff, but this requires the design and implementation of a Universal Access Gateway (UAG) system at 61 Woodland. The Office of Information Technology (OIT) is actively working on a project to develop a UAG design and a plan to implement this system to support VDI services. The timeline on this initiative is six (6) to twelve (12) months.

   f.   Printing Services

      i.   Some campuses have print centers, staffed for servicing student, faculty and staff print needs. Remote access to these print centers is not available. To utilize these services, students, faculty and staff, campuses will have to establish a process for these users to send files to the staff operating these print centers and retrieve the print jobs per the respective campuses protocol.

   g.   Equipment Pickup and Returns

      i.   Each campus should identify an equipment exchange location for students, faculty and staff to pick up and return requested technology equipment.

          i.   The equipment exchange should be located on each campus with easy access and egress, and along a path with minimal touch points.

          ii.   The equipment exchange should have set hours of operation and be staffed in order to confirm pickup and receipt of technology equipment.

          iii.   The equipment exchange staff should have a full complement of PPE, including face mask/face shield and gloves.

      ii.   Outgoing equipment should be properly prepared by IT staff per the specifications of the request.

      iii.   After the equipment is prepared for loan, it is recommended the equipment be disinfected / wiped down per current CDC guidelines, placed in a new clear plastic bag, labeled and stored in a plastic bin for exchange.

      iv.   Incoming equipment should be placed in a plastic bin by the student, faculty or staff and disinfected by equipment exchange staff with a disinfectant provided by the college.

10. <u>Contingency Plan for future outbreaks</u>

    a. Shutdown Plan**:**

        i. The campus should be prepared to shutdown at any time. All employees should be told to assume that they may not return the next day if an outbreak occurs. Each individual should have preparations in place to have a shutdown occur at a moment's notice and anticipate all services to be online.

        ii. The removal of protected data (in digital or hardcopy form) and/or a system or device containing protected data from a campus is prohibited under the BOR IT Acceptable Use Policy.

    b. Notifications (see section above)

    c. Isolation of areas / building, Campus closure (see section above)

11. Compliance / Legal Considerations

    a. If a community member (student, faculty, staff) who ask for accommodations (e.g. not coming to campus) based on what they believe to be an underlying risk factor for COVID-19?

- Community members who *have* serious underlying health conditions and require extra precautions under the CDC guidelines have the responsibility under the ADA and the Rehabilitation Act to self-identify and request a reasonable accommodation through the appropriate process established on each campus.

- According to CDC, telework or online learning is an example of social distancing, which public health authorities may require in the event of a pandemic. To reduce chances of infection during a pandemic, telework or attending classes online is an effective infection-control strategy and may be a reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities who are at high risk for COVID-19 complications.

- **Requests for Reasonable Accommodations**
  - **MASKS/FACE COVERINGS AND UNDERLYING HEALTH CONDITIONS**
    - All employees and students are required to wear a mask/face covering while on campus.
    - Any **employee** who requires a reasonable accommodation because of a medical condition that prevents them from wearing mask/face covering while on campus or has an

> underlying health condition that prevents them from returning to campus, has the responsibility to complete and submit the reasonable accommodation request form to the Office of Diversity and Inclusion or Human Resources Office.

> ▪ Prior to employees returning to campus, campus leaders shall review and confirm reasonable accommodation form and procedures are up to date and consistent with CSCU 2015 policy. The name(s) and contact information of the individual(s) designated as the ADA Coordinator(s) shall be provided to all employees.

> ▪ Any **student** who requires a reasonable accommodation because of a medical condition that prevents them from wearing mask/face covering while on campus or has an underlying health condition that prevents them from returning to campus has the responsibility to contact the Office of Accessibility Services. The contact information Office of Accessibility Services shall be provided to all students.

b. How do we handle an employee who declines to wear a face mask due to a health condition and cites the CECD's Safe Workplace prohibition on employers to require such an employee to "produce medical documentation verifying the stated condition"?

- The [CECD's Safe Workplace](#) prohibition on employers requiring "medical documentation verifying the stated [medical] condition," for employees who decline to wear a mask due to a health condition is most likely consistent with the ADA.
- An employer may request disability-related information from an employee only when: a) an employee self-identifies as having a qualifying disability under the ADA and requires a reasonable accommodation to perform the essential duties; or when b) an employer-initiated interactive process under a job-related inquiry is consistent with business necessity. **Outside these permissible conditions, an employer is prohibited from seeking information regarding an employee's disability.** This is consistent with the CECD's Safe Workplace rules which prohibit requesting "medical documentation *verifying* the stated [medical] condition." In other words, when an employee declines to wear a mask due to a medical reason, the employer may *not* respond by requiring the employee to "verify" the medical condition or by requesting the employee to disclose the

disability. Engaging the employee in the reasonable accommodation process with the Office of Inclusion and Diversity or Human Resources is key.

- If a person refuses to wear a mask they should be sent to HR. There that person can either disclose that they have a disability and engage in the interactive process with HR which may include providing medical documentation.
- The employee must volunteer the information. It should not be demanded; to do so violates the employee's rights.
- It is essential to promote shared responsibility and employee compliance with the established health and safety protocols through the proposed **CSCU communication plan**.
- If there is no valid medical reason for why an employee is not following the established health and safety protocols and continues to disregard the established health and safety protocols, the employee may be subject to discipline pursuant to the employee's job classification. CSCU institutions should adhere to established human resources and union processes on each campus regarding employee discipline. If issues escalate and HR or legal advice is required, it is advisable to contact the System Office HR or Legal Affairs prior to enforcing any disciplinary action to discuss the circumstances and assess the HR or legal implications.

c. How do we handle community members (student, faculty, staff) who insist on being on campus despite appearing to fit into a high-risk category?

- Prohibiting community members, who *appear* to fall into a high-risk category, from performing their duties or participating in educational activities would run afoul of the anti-discrimination laws. CSCU institutions cannot issue blanket prohibitions or mandatory teleworking/online learning based on high risk categories, health histories or disabilities, age or other protected classes. The student, faculty or staff member needs to self-identify as someone who has a medical condition consistent within the high-risk category(ies), as provided by CDC guidelines, and request a reasonable accommodation. Age is not a covered disability under the ADA and should not be treated as a reasonable accommodation. Colleges and Universities are required to institute health and safety protocols to cover all community members, without singling out individuals based on health or age risk factors.

d. **COVID-19-Related Liability Protection:** As of June 9, 2020, the U.S. Senate is in the early stages of drafting a bill that would protect individuals and businesses (possibly including higher

education institutions) from being held liable for personal injury due to exposure to COVID-19 in connection with the businesses' services or accommodations. This liability protection would apply only to businesses, services, and accommodations that adhere to government standards and guidance related to COVID-19 exposure. Businesses may be held liable in cases where there is a clear case of gross negligence, willful misconduct, intentional criminal misconduct, or intentional infliction of harm. The Governor is also assessing the risk of pandemic-related liability costs for higher education institutions and considering issuing an Executive Order.

Report of the Higher Education Subcommittee to Reopen Connecticut May 6, 2020