

SOUTHWESTERN LAW SCHOOL

L O S A N G E L E S

Student FAQs Regarding the Fall 2021 Semester

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These FAQs are for Southwestern Law School students and may be revised from time-to-time; these FAQs will be posted on Southwestern's [COVID Information and Updates page](#) (with an email notification sent to students' Southwestern email addresses).

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COVID-19 Vaccination

Am I required to get vaccinated against COVID-19?

Yes. All Southwestern students, faculty, staff, coaches, and volunteers are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. “Fully vaccinated” means receiving all doses of a vaccine—for example, two doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine or one dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine—and waiting 14 days after the last dose.

Which COVID-19 vaccines are acceptable?

Any vaccine that has been authorized by the FDA for use against COVID-19 is acceptable. There are currently three such vaccines: Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson. Any vaccine recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) is also acceptable.

I received my COVID-19 vaccine outside of the U.S. Does that meet the requirement?

As long as a COVID-19 vaccine has been authorized by the FDA or recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO), it will meet Southwestern’s COVID-19 vaccine requirement. If the vaccine you received is not one authorized or recommended by either organization, you will need to receive one that is. There are no known safety issues at this time with receiving an FDA-authorized vaccine after receiving one that has not yet been authorized or recommended.

I’m arriving from out of the country and do not have access to the vaccine in my current country. Will I be able to come to Southwestern, access the Southwestern campus, and attend in-person classes?

Yes. If you’ve not already done so, email covidmanager@swlaw.edu to explain your situation, and when you will arrive in the U.S. You must get vaccinated as soon as possible after your arrival in the United States and submit proof of vaccination to Southwestern using [this online form](#). Until 14 days have passed from your last dose, you must test twice per week with [Nobility Health](#). Once you are fully vaccinated, you may discontinue the regular testing, but you must still comply with all other campus health and safety protocols.

When is the deadline for getting vaccinated?

If you have not already been vaccinated, you should do so as soon as possible and submit proof of vaccination using [this online form](#). If you have not provided proof of vaccination or received notice that your request for an exemption from the vaccination requirement has been granted (see next question), you will not be permitted to register for fall courses or access the Southwestern campus. Registration for continuing students opened on July 29.

Are there any exemptions from the vaccination requirement?

Yes. Southwestern is allowing exemptions for medical or religious reasons. The procedures and deadlines for requesting either of these exceptions have been communicated to students—and have passed. If you are not yet vaccinated and want to claim an exemption, you must immediately contact covidmanager@swlaw.edu and explain why you did not apply for an exemption before the deadline.

What about an exemption for personal reasons?

Southwestern has eliminated the exemption based on personal reasons. All students who had requested the personal reasons exemption were notified by email on July 9 that the exemption is no longer available.

I have requested a religious exemption but have not heard whether it was granted. What should I do?

The deadline for requesting a religious exemption was Wednesday, July 14. If you have not heard a decision by August 2, please contact covidmanager@swlaw.edu.

I have requested a medical exemption. When will I be notified whether my request has been granted?

The deadline for requesting a medical exemption was Wednesday, July 21. If you have not heard a decision by August 2, please contact covidmanager@swlaw.edu.

I have been notified that my request for a medical or religious exemption has been granted. As an unvaccinated person with a Southwestern-approved exemption, what must I do to access the Southwestern campus and participate in in-person classes?

You must undergo COVID-19 testing twice per week with Southwestern's testing provider, Nobility Health, and observe all other campus health and safety protocols (e.g., wearing a mask at all times when indoors, etc.). For more information on these requirements, see the section of this FAQ on [Testing and Campus Health and Safety Protocols](#).

I do not qualify for a medical or religious exemption, but I still do not wish to get vaccinated against COVID-19 at this time. What are my options?

You may apply for a leave of absence by contacting the Dean of Students office at deanofstudents@swlaw.edu.

What consequences will follow if I do not provide proof of vaccination and have not been granted an exemption from Southwestern's vaccination requirement?

Unvaccinated students who have not received a medical or religious exemption will not be permitted to enroll in fall courses or access the Southwestern campus.

I had COVID-19. Do I still need to get vaccinated?

Yes. People who have already had COVID-19 must still be vaccinated. But please check with your medical provider about when you should seek the vaccination or whether you should seek a temporary medical exemption. Consult the [CDC website](#) for more specific guidance.

I've only recently received the first Pfizer or Moderna dose, and my second dose is not scheduled until after the semester starts. Will I be permitted to register for fall courses and access the Southwestern campus?

Yes. To be able to register for fall classes and access the Southwestern campus, you will need to have received a first dose of one of the three FDA-authorized vaccines and uploaded proof of your receipt of the first dose and, in the case of the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccines, proof that your second dose has been scheduled. Failure to upload proof of receiving both doses of Pfizer or Moderna **by 11:59 p.m. PDT on August 23 (11:59 p.m. PDT on August 30 for entering 1Ls)** will result in your administrative withdrawal from your courses; you will also be restricted from accessing the law school campus.

Until you are fully vaccinated—i.e., until (1) you have received both doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine or the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine and (2) a full 14 days have elapsed since your final dose—you will be required to wear a mask at all times when indoors on the Southwestern campus, complete COVID-19 testing twice per week with Southwestern's testing provider (Nobility Health), and comply with any other health and safety requirements Southwestern deems necessary.

What percentage of Southwestern employees are fully vaccinated?

As of July 30, 2021, approximately 95% of Southwestern employees (staff and full-time faculty) are fully vaccinated.

What percentage of Southwestern students are fully vaccinated?

As of July 30, 2021, over 84% percent of current Southwestern students are fully vaccinated, with an additional 7% partially vaccinated and a second dose scheduled (i.e., we will achieve an over 91% rate of fully vaccinated students).

May professors or staff members ask me my vaccination status?

No. All Southwestern employees will be instructed not to ask any student about their vaccination status. If someone asks about your status, please write covidmanager@swlaw.edu.

Will I ever be asked to show my proof of vaccination (the actual card or a photo of it) while on campus?

No. Once you complete the COVID-19 vaccine report form, the law school will have a record of your vaccination. You will not need to prove your vaccination status as you move around campus.

How will Southwestern use my self-reported COVID-19 vaccine information?

We will use this information solely in connection with our response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We will not share your information with other entities or organizations, except as needed for public health purposes in connection with our response to the pandemic, when legally required to do so, at the request of governmental authorities to conduct an investigation, to verify compliance with our policies and applicable laws, or to protect against misuse or unauthorized use of your information.

Is the vaccine mandate a one-time mandate, or will I be required to get boosters or annual shots?

This is a permanent policy. Infectious disease experts anticipate that annual or more frequent boosters will be necessary, and receipt of boosters will be required, consistent with product labeling, in the same way that the initial vaccination is required by this policy, subject to the same exceptions.

If I have additional questions about Southwestern's vaccination policy, to whom should I direct those questions?

Please direct questions to Southwestern's COVID Compliance Manager, Vivien Lewis, at covidmanager@swlaw.edu, to Vice Dean Waisman (dwaisman@swlaw.edu), or to Vice Dean Gharakhanian (agharakhanian@swlaw.edu).

COVID-19 Surveillance Testing and Campus Health and Safety Protocols

TESTING

Is regular testing required for unvaccinated students?

Yes. Starting on Tuesday, July 27, all unvaccinated students, faculty, and staff who come onto the Southwestern campus for any purpose are required to test **twice weekly** for COVID-19. Unvaccinated individuals include those who have not passed 14 days from receiving the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine or the final dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine.

Will testing be offered on the Southwestern campus?

Yes. [Nobility Health](#) will provide on-campus COVID-19 testing for Southwestern employees, students, and contractors. From this point forward, all COVID-19 surveillance testing must be administered by Nobility Health. Nobility Health will administer COVID-19 tests via a nasal swab.

In addition to providing surveillance testing for unvaccinated individuals, Nobility will also provide testing for vaccinated members of our community who request testing.

When will on-campus testing be offered?

Starting Tuesday, August 10, on-campus testing will be offered Tuesdays and Fridays from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. for the remainder of the semester. Testing will also be available on campus at the following times:

- Tuesday 07/27: 2 p.m.–3:30 p.m.
- Friday 07/30: 12:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.
- Tuesday 08/03: 12:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.
- Friday 08/06: 12:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.
- **All subsequent Tuesdays and Fridays: 12:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.**

Where on campus will testing take place?

Nobility Health will conduct testing on the lower level of the Bullocks Wilshire parking lot.

Are reservations required for on-campus testing?

No. Testing will be delivered on a walk-up basis. Reservations will not be needed (or taken).

Are there any steps I need to complete before I arrive for the test?

Yes. It is strongly recommended that you register and complete the onboarding process before arriving for your first testing. Registration and onboarding instructions are detailed in the [Nobility Health COVID Testing Instructions](#).

All individuals who participate in COVID-19 testing with Nobility must sign and return two forms to the testing site at the time of their first test.

- [Authorization for Disclosure and Use of Medical Information](#)
- [COVID Testing Informed Consent & Release](#)

These forms need to be signed and submitted only once for the academic year.

Is off-campus testing available through Nobility Health?

Yes. In addition to on-campus Tuesday/Friday testing at the Southwestern campus, Nobility provides testing at its locations in Glendale and South Los Angeles. If unvaccinated individuals from Southwestern participate in surveillance testing at one of Nobility's off-campus locations, **the surveillance testing must occur on Tuesdays and Fridays** (to follow the same testing schedule as on-campus testing).

The addresses of Nobility's locations are:

Nobility Health Glendale

435 Arden Ave (P3 parking level)

Glendale, CA 91203

Hours: Monday through Saturday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Location info: Pull into the parking structure of the Medical Building and drive up to P3.

The testing booth is located in the parking lot, and parking is free

Nobility Health Los Angeles

1709 W Manchester Ave

Los Angeles CA 90047

Hours: Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Location info: Storefront location with ample free parking adjacent to the building

Can I test off campus at a pharmacy, hospital, or testing service other than Nobility Health?

No. To satisfy Southwestern's testing requirement, you must test through Nobility, either on the Southwestern campus or at one of Nobility's two offsite locations.

Will I be charged for testing through Nobility?

No. You will not be charged for COVID-19 testing through Nobility. Nobility will charge your health insurance company for this test. After receiving a test, you may receive an Explanation of Benefits (EOB) from your health insurance company. Please note that this EOB is simply an explanation of your benefits and is **not** a bill.

Is COVID-19 testing required for vaccinated students?

No.

Is testing available to vaccinated students who wish to be tested?

Yes. In addition to providing surveillance testing for unvaccinated individuals, Nobility will also provide testing for vaccinated members of our community, at no charge to the person being tested.

If I am unvaccinated but do not complete testing twice a week, will I be permitted to access the Southwestern campus?

No. A general rule for unvaccinated students is that you will need to test negative for COVID-19 each Tuesday and Friday to access any part of the Southwestern campus (other than the testing site itself). (Students who live in the Residences should consult the [later FAQs](#).) Below are a few specific examples of when unvaccinated students will need to test to access campus on specific dates:

- To access campus facilities on August 2, an unvaccinated student must have tested on July 30 and received a negative result.
- To attend 1L Orientation on August 10, an unvaccinated student must have tested on August 6 and received a negative result.
- Unvaccinated 1L students will also need to test on August 10 (at Orientation) and receive a negative test to continue attending First Week classes starting on August 11.
- Once an unvaccinated student starts in-person classes, the first test negative test result must be on file. So, if an unvaccinated student is starting classes on August 18, the student must test on August 13 and August 17, and then every Friday and Tuesday thereafter.
- An unvaccinated student who applies for and is approved for a semester-long remote option must test and receive a negative result before entering campus facilities for any purpose, such as working in the library.

How will I receive my test results?

Nobility Health will send a secure link of your test results to you via text and email.

What if I forget to test one day and cannot get to a Nobility's offsite location that day?

Immediately email covidmanager@swlaw.edu, describe the situation, and await an answer. You likely will need to stay off campus until the next testing day. Do not return to campus until you have heard from the COVID Compliance Manager or a dean, or until you receive another negative test result from Nobility Health.

How will Southwestern monitor whether unvaccinated students are complying with the testing requirement?

Nobility Health provides a real-time, continuously updated data dashboard to Southwestern. An assigned employee monitors the testing frequency and test results of every individual who participates in testing with Nobility.

What happens if I test positive for COVID-19?

If you test positive for COVID-19 or your doctor thinks that you have COVID-19, you must report this to covidmanager@swlaw.edu and follow the L.A. County Home Isolation Instructions closely (found [here](#)).

Must I wait until the next on-campus testing day to retake the test if I suspect a false positive?

If you suspect a false positive, contact the COVID Compliance Manager (covidmanager@swlaw.edu) and discuss the situation. It may be possible for you to re-test at one of [Nobility's off-site locations](#). But, you may have to wait for the next on-campus testing day.

Who receives the results of my test?

Southwestern's COVID Compliance Manager will receive the results. She will share individual results with the appropriate county health officials, if needed. She may also share individual results with a small group of senior campus administrators (e.g., Dean, Executive Vice President, Vice Deans, and Dean of Students) on a need-to-know basis. If a student who is required to test fails to test and does not immediately contact the COVID Compliance Manager, the COVID Compliance Manager will share that information with campus administrators who have a need to know (e.g., Dean, Vice Deans, Executive Vice President, Dean of Students, Associate Dean for Student Affairs, and the head of campus security).

I am concerned about people seeing me test on campus and then making assumptions about my vaccine or medical status. How can I proceed?

Because vaccinated individuals may choose to test, no one should make assumptions about the vaccination status of an individual who is testing on campus. However, you do have the option to test at [Nobility's off-site locations](#).

If someone tests positive, will the campus community be notified?

If we learn that someone has visited campus during the period when they likely were contagious, the campus will be notified via Southwestern email. Southwestern will not identify the person who tested positive in that email.

If someone in my section or in my courses tests positive, will I be alerted?

If Southwestern is informed of a positive test result, we will begin a contact-tracing process. If you were in [close contact](#) with that person, you likely will be contacted through that process. During that process, you may learn the name of the individual who tested positive. Also, we will notify all students in a course or section if someone in their course or section tested positive and was physically in class, but will not reveal the person's name.

If someone in my class tests positive or is diagnosed with COVID-19, will that class be moved online for some period of time?

Whether a class is moved online for a period of time will depend on the results of the contact-tracing process. But a remote option is one possibility.

Do I need to report to Southwestern if I have been exposed to COVID-19, suspect exposure, or start experiencing symptoms of COVID-19?

Yes. Please report this information to covidmanager@swlaw.edu as soon as possible.

I have additional questions about Southwestern's COVID-19 surveillance testing policy or program. To whom should I direct such questions?

Please direct such questions to Southwestern's COVID Compliance Manager, Vivien Lewis, at covidmanager@swlaw.edu.

HEALTH & SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Will individuals accessing campus be required to undergo temperature screening or other health checks?

No. Southwestern has adopted a self-screening protocol. Under this protocol, members of the Southwestern community are required to screen themselves for COVID-19 symptoms and are not allowed to access the Southwestern campus if they have such symptoms. By coming to campus, you are representing that you do not have any COVID-19 symptoms.

Is there a way for me to check my temperature while I'm on campus?

Yes. Campus security has a touchless thermometer and cleaning supplies at the Bullocks Wilshire desk that you may use to take your own temperature.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Symptoms may appear 2–14 days after exposure to the COVID-19 virus and may include fever or chills, loss of taste or smell, cough, headache, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, sore throat, fatigue, nausea or vomiting, muscle or body aches, diarrhea, and runny or stuffy nose. Please check [CDC's website](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing) for the most current information.

What should I do if I am sick or experience COVID symptoms or cold- or flu-like symptoms?

If you have symptoms of COVID-19, talk to a healthcare provider and get a test for COVID-19. You should stay home and protect others until you get the result of your COVID-19 test or until your provider tells you that you don't have COVID-19. If you test positive for COVID-19 or your doctor thinks that you have COVID-19, you must follow the L.A. County Home Isolation Instructions closely (found [here](#)). If you test negative for COVID-19 or your provider tells you that you don't have COVID-19, stay home until you have been fever-free without the help of fever-reducing medicines for at least 24 hours.

Also, please do not access campus while you are experiencing flu-like or cold-like symptoms; use the [temporary remote option](#).

What protocols should I follow if I test positive for COVID-19?

Isolate and do not come to campus. Notify our COVID-19 Compliance Manager immediately at covidmanager@swlaw.edu. Follow the L.A. County Department of Public Health's home isolation instructions closely (found [here](#)). Monitor your symptoms carefully. If your symptoms get worse, call your healthcare provider immediately. You should not return to campus until at least 10 days after symptoms first appeared and at least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication and other symptoms of COVID-19 have improved. For more information on what to do when you have tested positive for COVID-19 and when to safely return to campus after testing positive, visit <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/ncorona2019/covidisolation/>.

What protocols should I follow if I suspect that I have been in close contact* with someone suffering from COVID-19?

Quarantine and stay home and separated from others for 10 days. Get tested for COVID-19. Monitor your health and take extra precautions for 14 days. Follow the L.A. County Health Officer Quarantine Order (found [here](#)).

You do not need to quarantine or get tested if you have no symptoms **and** you are fully vaccinated **or** tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 3 months and recovered. Even if you do not need to quarantine, it is important that you monitor your health for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days from your last contact with the infected person.

*A close contact means:

- You were within 6 feet for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period **or**
- You had unprotected contact with their body fluids or secretions. For example, you were coughed or sneezed on, you shared a drinking cup or eating utensils, you kissed, or you cared for them without wearing the right protective equipment.

Generally, how can I reduce the risk of contracting or transmitting COVID-19?

- Get vaccinated. Vaccination is the best way to protect yourself and your loved ones from COVID-19. It will slow the spread of COVID-19 including variants of the virus. And, it will also help lower the chances of new and more dangerous variants emerging.
- Wear a face covering that fits and filters well.
- Avoid crowded places.
- Wash your hands and/or use hand sanitizer often, especially after being in public spaces where surfaces are touched by many people. Avoid eating and touching your face with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when sick. If you have symptoms of COVID-19, talk to a doctor and get a test. You should stay home and away from others until you get the result of your COVID-19 test or until your provider tells you that you don't have COVID-19.

Someone just told me they tested positive for COVID-19, or I have interacted with someone on campus who is exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19. What should I do?

It is primarily their responsibility to inform Southwestern, so encourage the individual to do so. You should also feel free to assist someone in making such reports. You can also report concerns to covidmanager@swlaw.edu or the Dean of Students Office at deanofstudents@swlaw.edu.

Does the law school conduct contact tracing if someone reports a positive case of COVID-19?

Yes. When the law school's COVID Compliance Manager receives a report of a positive case, whether through Nobility Health or a member of the community, she will quickly start a contact-tracing process.

What if I'm sick right before or on the day of an examination or when an assignment is due?

Contact the Dean of Students immediately to discuss your situation. Do not contact the professor directly. You will be required to provide documentation from a medical provider to reschedule an exam or to receive an extension on an assignment.

What if I become sick and feel I cannot complete all of my classes for the semester?

Contact the Dean of Students to discuss your options, which may include a withdrawal, dropping some courses, or taking incomplete grades, depending on your particular circumstances. First-semester students should contact Associate Dean Gear to discuss their options.

What if I suddenly feel sick while on campus?

Campus Security will assist if you suddenly become ill on campus.

- If you are able to, relocate to an exterior location or your vehicle and then contact Campus Security at (213) 738-5793 to advise them of your location; someone will come and help you. If you drove to campus and are well enough, feel free to drive home or to a medical provider.
- A blue tent will also be available on the upper lot of the parking lot; you can go to that location and contact Campus Security.

MASKS

When and where are face coverings (masks) required on the Southwestern campus?

Per the recent L.A. County order, all individuals, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated, must wear a mask whenever in an indoor space with others. Information on L.A. County's mask requirement can be found [here](#).

Are masks required when I am outdoors on the Southwestern campus?

No. Masks are only required indoors. Of course, you may wear a mask outdoors.

If I am alone in a room on campus with the door shut (e.g., in a study room), do I have to wear a mask?

No. If you are alone in a room with the door shut, you do not need to wear a mask. Otherwise, you must wear a mask at all times while indoors, even if you know the other individual's vaccination status (but please don't ask them!).

What type of mask am I required to wear?

Acceptable masks include a surgical mask, a medical procedure mask, a respirator worn voluntarily, or a tightly woven fabric or non-woven material of at least two layers. A mask must not have any visible holes or openings and must cover the nose and mouth. Acceptable masks do not include a neck gaiter, scarf, ski mask, balaclava, bandana, turtleneck, collar, or single layer of fabric. Face shields are not a replacement for masks but may be worn with a face shield for additional protection. If you have a disability that prevents you from wearing a face mask, please contact the Dean of Students to discuss your situation.

How will Southwestern monitor and enforce the masking requirement?

Any individual on the Southwestern campus who is not wearing a mask or not wearing their mask properly will be asked to wear one or to adjust their mask so that it covers their mouth and nose and fits properly.

I'm worried I might forget my mask. Will disposable masks be available for individuals coming to campus?

Yes, a limited supply of surgical masks will be available at the Bullocks Wilshire security desk. All individuals are responsible for bringing their own mask to campus on a daily basis.

What happens if someone violates the mask requirement or another COVID-19 safety protocol?

Violations of Southwestern's COVID-19 policies and protocols, including the mask requirement, will be considered a violation of the Student Honor Code. Southwestern has the discretion to give a warning for a first offense but may also refer a first offense to the Honor Code Committee. All offenses after the first will be referred to the Honor Code Committee. Pending investigation and final outcome, the alleged violator's campus access may be suspended.

What if I see someone violating the mask or other safety protocol?

As a community, we are responsible for each other's safety as well as professional conduct. If you feel comfortable, remind the person about the school's masking requirement and other safety protocols. You can also advise Dean of Students (deanofstudents@swlaw.edu), COVID Compliance Manager (covidmanager@swlaw.edu), or one of the Vice Deans (dwaismen@swlaw.edu; agharakhanian@swlaw.edu) about the situation.

AIR QUALITY

What is being done for ventilation?

Our air-handling units are operating in 100% outdoor air mode, wherever possible, to reduce recirculating air. This is similar to running the AC in your house with the windows open, and provides maximum ventilation.

How is building air filtration being handled?

We have moved to MERV-15 building filters where possible. Most building filters are now MERV-15. All other building filters are at least MERV-13. MERV-15 filters trap 94% of small particles.

What is being done for air cleaning?

We have installed HEPA air scrubbers in every classroom. These are 99.97% efficient. They remove any particles as small as 0.3 microns in size.

How is Southwestern monitoring air quality?

We are monitoring the air quality in each of our indoor classrooms and other spaces that monitor carbon dioxide, volatile organic compounds, radon, and other elements.

Will I be able to smoke on campus?

No. You may not smoke on campus (including in the Residences) or within 15 feet of any entrance to campus.

Fall 2021 Orientation and Week One

Will Orientation be in person?

The current plan is to have traditional 1L Orientation in person. If plans change, we will notify the entering traditional 1Ls by August 5. Unvaccinated students attending Orientation in person must test with Nobility Health on August 6 and again on August 10. All students and others participating in Orientation on campus must wear a mask while indoors. If you have been approved for a semester-long remote option, you will participate in Orientation remotely.

Will Orientation be livestreamed?

Entering traditional 1Ls who have been approved for a remote option will be able to participate in Orientation via livestreaming. Other students should plan to attend on campus, wearing a mask.

Will Week One classes be in person?

The current plan is to have the Week One classes and sessions in person, other than a few sessions as indicated in the [Week One schedules](#) (under “Week Once Classes begin”). Entering traditional 1Ls who have been approved for a remote option will be able to participate in Week One classes and sessions online.

Fall 2021 Instruction

FORMAT

Is the school going forward with its plan for fall courses to meet in person and on campus?

Although we have not yet made a final decision, we hope that we will be able to start in-person and remain so for the duration of the semester, as has been our plan since early June. If the COVID-19 trends in L.A. County preclude an in-person start to the semester, we hope that we can at least offer in-person instruction during a significant part of the semester. We are closely monitoring information about the Delta variant. (Please note that, as has already been announced, all classes during the first two weeks of SCALE II, Period 5 classes that start on August 2 will be conducted remotely.)

When will Southwestern announce whether classes will start in person?

We will make the announcement no later than August 5. Of course, given the fluid situation, we could pivot to remote learning after that date, and on very short notice, if needed.

Assuming classes start in person, what will they look like?

For students attending on campus, classes will look similar to how they looked in non-pandemic times. The main difference will be that, in compliance with the recent L.A. County order, all students and faculty will be required to wear masks throughout the class. You will also see some new technology in the classrooms. Professors will use microphones to ensure they are audible. There will be no capacity restrictions in classrooms and no mandatory physical distancing. Some classes may have students who, due to COVID-related reasons, have been approved to participate in class remotely.

What about simulation and smaller courses?

Some simulation and smaller courses may be 100% online or partially online, even if the rest of the fall semester classes are in-person. That is because students in these classes need to be able to see and show facial expressions as part of the course activities and/or engage in extensive oral communications. During the week of [August 2, we will notify students about which courses will be 100% remote](#).

What about externships?

Whether a student attends an externship placement in person or remotely will vary by the placement site. For more information about particular placements, please contact the Externship Office at externoffice@swlaw.edu.

What about clinic fieldwork?

Whether a student performs fieldwork in person or remotely (or a combination of both) will vary depending on the clinic and the type of activity. Please contact your clinic director for additional information.

May advocacy honors teams travel this semester?

Your Honors Program faculty will advise you whether any teams will travel this semester for competitions. Please note that students who have applied for and been approved for a semester-long remote option should not travel on competition teams or other official school business.

Are any physical or social distancing requirements currently in force anywhere on campus?

No. Physical/social distancing is no longer required by the local health authorities.

Are any COVID-related occupancy capacity restrictions in effect for classrooms or other indoor spaces?

No. There are currently no COVID-related capacity restrictions imposed by the local health authorities.

Will classes be recorded? If so, where will the recordings be posted?

Yes. With the exception of a small number of classes where recording is not feasible due to confidentiality (e.g., clinics) or other compelling reasons, classes will be recorded and posted on the Canvas page for the course. A student is not deemed to have attended a class simply by reviewing the recording. Southwestern's plan to record classes is not a guarantee of a successful or an entirely audible recording. Recordings may be limited by available technology, by equipment or technology failure, or by human error. Students who miss a class are encouraged to seek notes from classmates and visit the professor during office hours if they have questions about concepts they missed.

What happens if someone posts my photo from a remote class on the internet or posts a class recording on a site other than the course Canvas page?

Southwestern strives to safeguard the intellectual property of its faculty and the privacy of its students, prospective students, and employees in online learning environments and other online events and activities hosted or sponsored by the law school. To protect these interests, students and other participants may not copy, record, reproduce, screenshot, photograph, or distribute any content, including documents, audio, video, images, and other visual content

from online courses and events. This restriction on copying and distribution includes but is not limited to:

- Recorded and live lectures (including images derived from such recordings, like screenshots)
- Live discussions or meetings;
- Discussion boards;
- Simulations;
- Posted course materials;
- Exams, quizzes, and other assessments (whether graded or ungraded);
- Faculty feedback forms;
- Visual materials that accompany lectures/discussions, such as slides;
- Virtual whiteboard notes, etc.; and
- Images of students, faculty, or other participants.

Please report violations of this standard to the Dean of Students Office. Violators may be subject to Honor Code proceedings.

REMOTE LEARNING OPTIONS

If fall classes are in person, will there be an option for semester-long remote participation?

Yes, for individuals who meet certain criteria. For any portion of the fall semester in which classes are held in person, students in the following categories may apply for a semester-long remote participation option:

- Individuals with a personal medical reason that would make it unsafe for them to attend in-person classes (e.g., immunocompromised);
- Individuals who are pregnant or breastfeeding;
- PLEAS students;
- Caregivers for or those who live in a household with vulnerable individuals (e.g., children under 12; immunocompromised individuals who cannot be vaccinated); and
- Unvaccinated individuals, with a Southwestern-approved medical or religious exemption, who are not comfortable coming to campus for a health-related reason.

How and by when should I apply for the semester-long remote option?

Please complete and submit the Fall 2021 Application for Online Courses by **August 3, 2021**. The form is located at www.swlaw.edu/fall21remote and also may be found on the Entering Student Canvas page under “Getting Organized” on the Registration Portal Page. The form is short and should take only 5–10 minutes to complete. We need to **strictly enforce** the August 3 deadline to help faculty plan their approach to having both in-person and remote students.

If I apply for a semester-long remote option, when will I know if my application has been granted?

We are reviewing applications on a rolling basis. Students who meet the August 3 deadline will be informed by August 6 whether their application has been granted, unless the law school needs additional documentation to complete the review.

What if I have a COVID-related reason to request semester-long remote instruction other than those listed above?

We are not offering a general remote option for a variety of reasons, including accreditation standards and the various safety measures the Law School has implemented. However, if you have a COVID-related reason to request semester-long remote learning that is not listed above, please email Vice Deans Dov Waisman and Anahid Gharakhanian by **August 3** and describe your circumstances. They will consider your information and determine whether you are eligible to participate in courses remotely.

What if I have temporary circumstances that necessitate remote learning?

In addition to the semester-long remote option, students who are experiencing temporary circumstances may—by notifying the course professor—participate in classes remotely **for up to two weeks**. Examples that qualify for temporary remote learning include:

- Testing positive for COVID, flu, or another contagious disease;
- Exposure/suspected exposure to COVID;
- Feeling ill or experiencing (even mildly) COVID or flu symptoms; and
- Intermittent caretaker responsibilities for vulnerable individuals.

To help comply with accreditation standards, temporary remote days are not for convenience (e.g., oversleeping, avoiding a long commute, etc.), but must be for COVID or another medical reason, as noted above.

Are the remote options available to all students?

Any Southwestern student, regardless of program, year, or vaccination status, may apply for the semester-long remote option and may use the temporary remote option. However, unvaccinated students requesting a remote option must have a Southwestern-approved exemption.

Do I need to apply for the temporary remote option?

No. Simply notify your professor via email that you will be participating remotely pursuant to the temporary remote option. It is your responsibility to ensure that you do not participate remotely for more than two weeks.

What happens if I am not able to return to in-person classes after two weeks?

If it's only for another day or two, notify your professor. Otherwise, you should apply to switch to the semester-long remote option. The form (Fall 2021 Request for Change in Modality) is located at www.swlaw.edu/fall21switch and also may be found on the Entering Student Canvas page under "Getting Organized."

What happens if I need to use the temporary remote option more than once during the semester?

If you have already used the temporary option once and need to use it again, contact the Dean of Students Office (deanofstudents@swlaw.edu) to discuss the situation.

What if I need to switch mid-semester from in-person to remote learning, or vice versa?

If a student experiences a **mid-semester change in circumstances**, they should complete the Fall 2021 Request for Change in Modality application to switch from remote to in-person learning, or vice versa. The form is located at www.swlaw.edu/fall21switch and also may be found on the Entering Student Canvas page under "Getting Organized."

What will remote participation in in-person classes look like?

Although the answer to that question will vary from professor to professor, we want to ensure that students attending class remotely are engaged and can participate in the courses. Remote participation is via Zoom. In most instances, remote students will be able to see and hear the professor and other remote students but will not be able to see the rest of the class; remote students should be able to hear on-campus students.

How will attendance be taken for those students participating remotely?

Remote students will be marked "present" if they attend the class in real-time (as opposed to reviewing a recording of the class) and check in on the attendance app. The Qwickly attendance platform will be used to record attendance both for students present on campus and for those participating remotely. Professors do have discretion to add attendance requirements.

What if a remote student loses internet connection during class? Will they still be marked present?

A remote student who loses an internet connection should reach out to the professor if they lost the connection during the check-in window and could not mark themselves present. Students also should discuss other connectivity issues directly with the professor. The professor will notify the Dean of Students if a student misses more than 14% of the class.

If I have been granted the semester-long remote option, can I still come to campus for other reasons?

You may come to campus to use the Library and study rooms. **However, you will not be permitted to participate in in-person classes and or on-campus events. Please note:** If you are unvaccinated and wish to come to campus for any reason, you will need to comply with the twice-weekly testing requirement.

Will faculty have the option to teach their classes remotely?

Yes. Just as students with any of the circumstances listed above may seek a semester-long remote option, faculty with such circumstances may do so as well. Faculty may also move classes online for up to two weeks for the same reasons students may request a temporary remote option.

When will I know if my professor will be teaching remotely for the semester?

You will be able to see in WebAdvisor whether a course is being taught remotely or in person for the semester. Also, you will be notified by email during the week of August 2 if a course in which you are enrolled is being taught remotely.

How will I be notified if a professor uses the temporary remote option?

You will be notified via email as soon as practicable after the administration receives notice from the professor that they need to use the temporary remote option.

If I am attending classes in person and cannot go home to attend a remote class, what should I do?

Every class will have a designated classroom that can be used for remote participation in the event the class does not meet in-person for some or all of the semester. You can go to that classroom to participate in the remote class. You can also go to any other quiet place on campus in which you can speak without disturbing others (e.g., a study room in the Library). You should not participate in remote classes from Library carrels or open spaces in the Library. **You will need your laptop and headphones to participate in a remote class from campus; based on experience, we encourage students to use wired and not wireless headphones.**

May I bring a beverage to class and drink it during class?

You may bring a non-alcoholic beverage to class. But please unmask only for brief moments while you take a sip or use a straw and slip the straw under your mask.

May I unmask to speak when I am called on in class?

No. While the L.A. mask mandate is in place, no student may unmask while in class on campus except to take a brief sip of a beverage. We will re-evaluate this answer if the mask mandate is lifted. Please do try to speak up so students in the classroom and students participating remotely can hear.

EXAMS AND GRADING

How will fall final and midterm exams be administered: in person or remotely?

We are in the process of determining the format of midterm and final exams in the fall semester. We will make this determination early in the fall semester, as we understand students need to know what sort of exam to prepare for.

Will there be a Credit/No Credit grading option for fall 2021 semester courses?

No. Southwestern's normal grading policy will be followed, as was the case in the 2020-2021 academic year.

Has Southwestern modified any of its other academic policies for the semester?

No. All other academic policies remain the same.

COVID-19 Campus Policies and Protocols

CAMPUS ACCESS & RESTRICTIONS

When can I access the Southwestern campus?

The Southwestern campus will be open as of Monday, August 2, to all students who are vaccinated or have a Southwestern-approved exemption. The Library is currently open to continuing students.

Are reservations still required to use the Library?

No. The Library is now available on an open, walk-in basis. Study rooms will return to their pre-pandemic reservation policies.

May I eat or drink in the Library?

You may take brief sips of a non-alcoholic drink in the Library, but students may not eat in the Library until further notice.

Where can I eat indoors on campus?

Students are encouraged to eat outside. Options to eat outside include the Commons, the Promenade, and the tables set up on the top level of the BW parking lot. We may open the Tea Room for indoor eating; if so, we will announce those plans later. If a student has access to a private room (not in the Library), the student may eat in that room, if they are alone and the door is closed.

Is the Tea Room open?

The Tea Room is currently not open. We are working with the vendor to attempt to reopen the Tea Room for the start of traditional fall classes. We will update the community via email as plans are finalized.

Is the Fitness Center open?

The Fitness Center is not open. We are evaluating this space and will open it when conditions permit.

Is the Campus Bookstore open?

The Campus Bookstore will open on August 2, 2021. Online purchases and curbside pick-up continue to be an option, but by appointment only. Hours of operations will be:

August 2–August 6: Monday– Thursday, 10 a.m.–4 p.m. and Friday, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

Beginning on August 9 and through the Fall semester: Mondays– Thursdays, 10 a.m.–6 p.m. and Fridays, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

I see people wearing red, yellow, and green wristbands. What do they mean?

These [social bands](#) are a silent way for individuals to communicate with others their preferences about social distancing. Red means a person prefers to stay 6 feet away from others, if possible (so, no hugging, handshakes, elbow bumps, etc.). Yellow means the person will elbow-bump but not shake hands. Green means a person is willing to shake hands and give high-fives.

Where can I get a wristband or get a different color wristband?

Wristbands will be available during Orientation and inside the entrances of Bullocks Wilshire and the Westmoreland Buildings. We do not require anyone to wear the bands. Also, we understand that people may have different social-distancing preferences depending on the circumstances, so you are allowed to take more than one color band.

OUTSIDE VISITORS TO CAMPUS

What protocols are campus visitors required to follow?

All visitors to campus must show proof of vaccination to gain campus access. They can do this by showing their vaccination card, or an accurate photo of that card, at the Bullocks Wilshire security desk. Individuals who cannot provide a form of proof will not be granted access. Exceptions to this rule include but are not limited to delivery persons, prospective students, families of students/prospective students, guests in the residences, legal clinic clients, etc. These visiting individuals must wear an appropriate face covering while on campus.

THE RESIDENCES

What protocols are guests and visitors to The Residences required to follow?

- All resident guests and visitors are required to wear a mask indoors while outside of the resident's unit and in communal shared spaces, regardless of vaccination status. The mask must cover the individual's mouth and nose. Southwestern requires that masks go over the ears and not bandanas or gaiters. Vented masks are not permitted. For more information, see the [Masks FAQs](#).
- All resident guests and visitors present must adhere to personal prevention actions including:
 - Stay home when you are sick.
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Wash your hands at a minimum before meals, after using the restroom and after coughing and sneezing.
 - Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue, and then dispose of the tissue and clean your hands immediately. If you do not have a tissue, use your elbow (not your hands).
 - Do not touch your mouth, eyes, or nose with unwashed hands.
 - Avoid contact with people who are sick. Avoid sharing items such as phones or other devices. If devices must be shared be sure to wipe them down with a disinfectant wipe before and after sharing.
 - Constantly observe distances in relation to other individuals. When possible, maintain the recommended minimum 6 feet separation from individuals outside of your immediate household.

I live in The Residences. What happens if I test positive for COVID-19?

Please notify covidmanager@swlaw.edu. Isolate in your unit for the [number of days recommended by the CDC](#). If you must use the common areas, wear a mask and be as brief as possible. Do not access other parts of campus.

Travel

Is it okay to travel home or to visit friends on the weekend?

Yes, provided that you strictly adhere to the local and CDC guidelines for domestic travel. International travel is not recommended.

What are the current guidelines for domestic and international travel?

L.A. County's Travel Advisory and Guidance can be found [here](#).

The CDC travel guidelines can be found [here](#).

Events and Student Organization Activities

Will events be held on campus this semester?

Some events will be held on campus, but most larger events will either be held remotely or will be livestreamed and/or recorded.

Will in-person events be livestreamed or recorded?

School-sponsored events will be livestreamed and/or recorded whenever possible. We encourage student organizations to do the same.

Can student organizations hold on-campus events and meetings? If so, must they livestream the events and meetings?

Student organizations can hold events and meetings on campus but should coordinate in advance with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs to help plan the event or meeting and discuss various considerations, such as how to involve students who are attending classes remotely.

Can student organizations serve food at events?

Student organizations cannot serve food during an indoor event (even if only a few people are expected to attend in a large room) but can serve food outdoors. Please contact the Associate Dean for Student Affairs to discuss options.

Can student organizations reserve outdoor spaces for events?

Student organizations can reserve limited outdoor spaces on the Southwestern campus for social mixer events. During 12:30–1:30 p.m. and 5:00–6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, outdoor spaces will be reserved for the general student population to eat lunch and dinner, unless there is an all-school program or other special event approved by the Dean's Office. General student organization meetings will take place in classroom settings, without food. (They can also be held remotely.) Please complete the facilities usage request form located on the

Student Affairs Canvas page to reserve a space on campus. Student organizations can direct questions related to classroom and outdoor spaces to Robert Mena, Associate Dean for Student Affairs at rmena@swlaw.edu.

Additional Questions

We understand that many of the topics we are addressing are complicated and that individual students may have fact-based scenarios they would like to discuss with us. So, in addition to attending and viewing recordings of the town halls (all posted on the Student Affairs Canvas page), please feel free to reach out to the individuals below, all of whom are glad to address your questions and concerns.

- **Vice Deans Dov Waisman and Anahid Gharakhanian**—general policies; religious and medical exemptions; specific course schedules; remote options. Email: dwaisman@swlaw.edu; agharakhanian@swlaw.edu
- **Nydia Duenez, Dean of Students and Diversity Affairs**—general policies; ADA accommodations; pregnancy and breastfeeding accommodations; attendance issues; diversity affairs. Email: nduenez@swlaw.edu
- **Robert Mena, Associate Dean, Student Affairs**—general policies; 1L orientation; student organizations and student events. Email: rmena@swlaw.edu
- **Vivien Lewis, COVID-19 Compliance Manager**—specific safety protocols (e.g., contact tracing); medical exemptions; vaccination status; COVID testing. Email: covidmanager@swlaw.edu
- **Lisa Gear, Associate Dean, Admissions**—questions from entering students. Email: lgear@swlaw.edu