

Greetings Students,

As many of you are aware, there have been numerous outbreaks of COVID-19 on college campuses across the country and in New York State, some occurring on campuses in very close proximity to Cobleskill.

In order to keep our campus as safe as possible, the College and the State University of New York are **mandating** that all students participate in pooled testing. Any student who comes to campus for any reason will need to be tested. Faculty and staff will also be participating in pooled testing, again, to keep everyone safe.

We have been extremely fortunate with our “pooled testing” in that all the tests have come back negative, to date. We are also hoping that pooled testing will enable us to relax a little on the restrictions on campus, particularly around students getting together in small groups (while socially distancing, wearing masks, and washing hands regularly). But, the only way to do that is to ensure that we remain uninfected. This is extremely important as we have seen how rapidly things can turn on college campuses when COVID-19 gets into a campus population. Here are a few Q & As to help answer some questions about pooled testing: See Q&A below.

And check out this brief video: <https://youtu.be/rv1YE5LvAro>

Watch for an email where you can register for pooled testing and sign up for a date and time.

We are extremely proud of all the efforts that students have been taking to remain healthy. Thank you for taking this situation seriously and ensuring that your health and the health of others is a top priority.

Warmly,

Anne Hopkins Gross, EdD.  
Vice President for Student Development

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**The following are a few Q & A to help answer your questions:**

**What is pooled testing?** The good news is it’s a simple, painless, noninvasive test involving the swabbing of one’s saliva. Individual samples are “pooled” together at the end of the testing day into random groups. SUNY Upstate oversees our pooled testing program, and they will share with us if a student is positive or negative for COVID-19. Our local Department of Health will also be made aware if the outcome is positive. If a residential student tests positive, the student will be asked to return home to isolate. If there are extenuating circumstances, which will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, a student will be relocated to isolate in a different residence hall. For commuter students, you will be tracked by the Department of Health as well and will be required to isolate in residence off campus.

**How often do I have to be tested?** Testing will occur approximately once per month, which may equate to two or three times during this fall semester. However, if we see a rise in cases, we may need to pooled test more frequently.

**Why didn't I know about pooled testing before the semester began?** This is new technology only recently available, and SUNY is pleased to be able to offer this process to the state campuses across New York State.

**How do I sign up to be tested?** You will receive an email invite to register to take the test on campus and sign up for a date and time. Reminders about what to do and not do before pooled testing will also be provided.

**Where should I go on campus to be tested?** Currently, we will be pooled testing in Bouck 120. If this location changes, we'll let you know.

**How long will the testing take?** No more than 20-30 minutes. The actual swabbing is just a few pain-free seconds.

**What do I need to bring to the testing site?** Please bring your College ID (800 #). Insurance covers the cost of the test. If, for some reason, your insurance won't cover the test, the College will cover the cost. Insurance information when you sign up for a date and time.

**When will I receive the test results?** Currently, we are being told between three to four days for the results to get to campus. If a student tests positive, the Wellness Center will reach out to you and walk you through the isolation process.

**What if I don't want to be tested?** Sorry, but that's not a choice at this time if you will be on campus for any amount of time during the fall semester. Everyone's good health is too important and, now that we have this technology, we can use it to our advantage to further the College's efforts in providing an environment that is safe.

**What if I know that I will not be coming to campus for any reason during the fall semester, do I still have to participate in the pooled testing?** No, but you will be required to sign a statement indicating your promise to never be on campus during the fall semester.

**If I have more questions, who can I contact?** Please email [COVIDtesting@cobleskill.edu](mailto:COVIDtesting@cobleskill.edu). We will be responding to questions during the workday.

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