



August 7, 2020

To SUNY Poly Faculty, Staff, and Students,

As we continue to prepare for the start of SUNY Poly's fall 2020 semester, I wanted to take stock and share my appreciation for the incredible effort our campus community has undertaken. I am proud that together, we have brought to bear the full strength of SUNY Poly's spirit on the challenge of meeting our educational and research mission at a time when a global pandemic has turned the basic tenets of human interaction upside down.

In a testament to our focus and fortitude, approximately 335 faculty, staff, and students have worked together in developing our comprehensive 2020 fall plan. Countless hours have been spent by planning teams, steering committees, working groups, virtual town hall meetings and roundtable discussions to develop it; if you have not already read the plan, it is available here: <https://sunypoly.edu/fall2020plan.html>. This plan meets or exceeds all New York State Reopening Higher Education requirements, which are some of the most stringent in the nation.

This plan could not have moved forward without our partners. We have worked hand-in-hand with SUNY to receive fall 2020 plan approval. We are collaborating with our local health departments and healthcare providers to ensure the best practices that can be applied to our institution—and in order to be ready and proactive to address any challenges we may face. We have worked closely with NY Forward regional reopening representatives, are following CDC and NYS Department of Health guidelines, and continue to meet with local higher education institutions to encourage alignment. Already six SUNY Poly employees have been trained to be contact tracers to support local health departments in their efforts to mitigate the pandemic.

Our work is not done. Faculty and staff have diligently provided answers to more than 200 thoughtful questions, and we continue to refine our plan as we receive updated guidance and technological advances. I urge you to review the fall 2020 plan FAQs at <https://sunypoly.edu/fall2020plan/faqs>.

In short, our number one priority is to support each other's health by:

- Reducing classroom and laboratory density;
- Adapting dining services to provide service that prioritizes health and safety;
- Requiring face coverings be worn at all times, including inside all buildings, classrooms, shared laboratory areas, conference rooms, restrooms, elevators, hallways, etc.;
- Adapting the fall 2020 semester calendar, which now begins with on-campus and online instruction on August 24, and, afterward, moves to online/distance instruction and final exams for the remainder of the semester;
- Enacting detailed, daily cleaning protocols and upgrading HVAC systems;
- Employing comprehensive pre-arrival and daily screenings, contact tracing in partnership with local health departments, and testing and quarantine as needed;
- Providing telehealth and telemedicine, including mental health resources, among numerous other efforts; and
- Working on the details of testing processes and capacity.



Our plan continues to evolve because our understanding of COVID-19 and the guidance to address it continues to change. This is why our plan is designed to be flexible, especially as new technologies and procedures become available. Significantly, we continue to receive feedback from faculty, staff, students, and parents, and encourage anyone with questions or suggestions to send an email to fall2020plan@sunypoly.edu.

I am deeply grateful for each and every person who is laying the groundwork for a successful fall semester, whether by crafting critical policies, engaging to help this plan evolve, or by taking simple, important actions, such as completing the daily pre-screening, wearing a mask, and maintaining social distance. All these efforts give us the best opportunity to move forward in this ever uncertain time.

Sincerely,

Dr. Grace Wang
Interim President
SUNY Polytechnic Institute