UC SANTA BARBARA

THE Current

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Andrea Estrada

Preventative Measure

The UC Office of the President last week announced a proposed policy that would require students, employees and academic employees who wish to access campus facilities at any UC location to be immunized against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. The requirement would go into effect beginning fall quarter, or as soon as a vaccine is granted full approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, whichever comes later.

While continuing to review policy requirements, UC strongly encourages members of the UC community to obtain vaccinations as soon as they are eligible and are able to schedule appointments.

In an email yesterday that followed up on UCOP's initial notice, UC Santa Barbara's policy coordinator, Jennifer Lofthus, announced the beginning of the official 30-day review period. Faculty and staff members and students are invited to review the proposed policy and provide feedback by emailing policy@ucsb.edu no later than May 26.

"Receiving a vaccine for the virus that causes COVID-19 is a key step people can take to protect themselves, their friends and family, and our campus communities while helping bring the pandemic to an end," said UC President Michael V. Drake, M.D.

UC is joined by the California State University (CSU) in announcing its proposed policy. "Together, the CSU and UC enroll and employ more than one million students

and employees across 33 major university campuses, so this is the most comprehensive and consequential university plan for COVID-19 vaccines in the country," said CSU Chancellor Joseph I. Castro. "Consistent with previous CSU announcements related to the university's response to the pandemic, we are sharing this information now to give students, their families and our employees ample time to make plans to be vaccinated prior to the start of the fall term."

As outlined in FAQs provided by the UC Office of the President, if the proposed policy is adopted students, faculty and staff members and academic appointees who choose not to be immunized and who do not receive an approved medical exemption or religious belief exception may be limited in accessing UC facilities. Students would remain eligible to receive university services, but would be limited in course registration, would not be permitted to attend in-person classes or events, and would not be able to access campus facilities, including housing.

Medical exemption and religious belief exceptions requests will be considered, but if approved may result in alternative safety precautions such as increased surveillance testing.

UC campuses have systems in place for promoting compliance with health and safety policies and protocols, and these protocols have been enhanced during the past year of the COVID-19 pandemic, the FAQs continue. Because of the differences in programs and facilities across the UC system, each campus will communicate to its respective communities the details of procedure at each UC location.

Students planning to access UC campuses for the fall will need to update their immunization documentation on file to indicate vaccination or an approved exception or medical exemption prior to coming on campus. For those who are unable to receive a vaccine prior to campus arrival, student health centers may be able to find local resources for vaccinations, but special protections may be required. Faculty, academic appointees and staff will be advised on the process for providing vaccination information after that policy is finalized.

More information about the policy can be found on UCnet and in FAQs for students and for employees. The proposed policy and the FAQs are also available in Spanish.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.