

From: [OlinAhead](#)
To: [Olin Listserve](#); [Students - All Olin Students](#); [Parents \(forwarding\)](#)
Cc: [OlinAhead](#)
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Dear Olin Community,

The Olin Ahead team has been quiet for a while now, but we are writing to update you on the College's plans moving forward. This is a long email, but there are a lot of updates, so we ask that you read the entire document.

Olin Ahead Team

As we head into the summer months and begin the transition to a more typical summer and fall at Olin, the OACT will continue to provide you with a series of Olin Ahead updates. We currently anticipate these will continue through the end of September, when we expect to wrap up our work.

We are immensely thankful to all who contributed to Olin Ahead in the 2020-21 academic year.

We would especially like to thank Lynn Andrea Stein as she departs for her sabbatical. Lynn's tireless leadership on behalf of Olin and the OACT throughout the pandemic helped our community evolve in tandem with constantly changing COVID-19 regulations, support our employees and students and, in collaboration with so many of you, pivot our institution toward a successful year of hybrid learning. Thank you, Lynn!

The new configuration of the Olin Ahead Coordinating Team includes Jeremy Goodman, Alisha Sarang-Sieminski, Linda Canavan, Joanne Pratt and Beth Grampetro. This revised team is charged with coordinating and guiding Olin's return to fully in-person learning and living for the fall in collaboration with all areas of the College.

Vaccination Update

Olin is now requiring COVID-19 vaccination for all students and employees starting in the Fall 2021 semester.

We have, in part, made this decision because of increasing concern about the Delta variant of COVID-19 (see below for more information). Before returning to campus for the fall semester, students and employees must provide proof that they have received a vaccine approved for use by either the US FDA or the WHO. There will be an exemption process for those with sincerely held religious beliefs that do not allow vaccination or those who have been advised not to receive vaccines by their medical provider. Students will receive a follow up communication from Beth within the next week and employees will receive one from Jeremy. Proof of vaccination must be submitted by faculty, staff and students, or alternate arrangements made, by August 16, 2021.

For those who are on campus during the summer, the College continues to require notification of your vaccination status. If you are not fully vaccinated and are on campus this summer, you must continue to wear a mask indoors and practice social distancing.

Here is some information about where to get a COVID-19 vaccine in Massachusetts/the US if you are still looking:

- [COVID-19 vaccination in Massachusetts](#)
- [How to find a COVID-19 vaccine in the US](#)

Mask Update

Masks are **always okay** on the Olin campus! Keep in mind that different people have different comfort levels and risk considerations, so be prepared and have a mask with you even if you are fully vaccinated. Additionally, if you are meeting in a group, we suggest that you discuss in advance what the group's mask wearing norms will be for the gathering.

Testing Update

We have seen very high vaccination rates among those on campus this summer -- 95% of on-campus students are fully vaccinated and over 100 employees have submitted their documentation. The percent positivity rate in Massachusetts has fallen below 1%. Given these conditions, asymptomatic testing will end today (June 29) as planned. We are considering what our testing strategy will be for the fall; please stay tuned.

Visitor Policy

Effective immediately, we are allowing visitors on campus. A visitor is defined as any person who comes to campus for a defined purpose of limited duration. The Olin community member hosting a visitor must ensure the restrictions below are followed:

- **Individuals.** An individual visiting the campus must be invited by someone working or living on campus. The inviting individual is responsible for ensuring that a [Visitor/Vendor Record Form](#) is completed at the start of their visit to document the visitor's name and contact information. If the visiting individual is fully vaccinated, they may forgo wearing a mask while on campus. If they are not fully vaccinated or do not wish to disclose their vaccination status, they must wear a mask while indoors.
- **Vendors.** Individuals visiting the campus in order to work on Olin's behalf who are not directly employed by the college or one of our partners (e.g., Aramark, Rebecca's, Babson) must also be [documented](#) and follow the same rules as individual visitors above.
- **Groups.** For any event that brings groups of people to campus (such as Admission tours), the sponsoring group must keep a record of names and contact information of all visitors. These records may be kept separately from the Visitor/Vendor Record Form. In this instance, all group visitors must remain masked while indoors, even if fully vaccinated.

Regardless of vaccination status, no visitor or vendor who is experiencing symptoms of illness, has tested positive for COVID-19 (or any other communicable illness) within 7 days of intended visit date, or has been advised to quarantine or isolate is permitted on campus.

Coronavirus Delta Variant

The Delta variant of coronavirus was recently [named a variant of concern by the CDC](#) because it appears to be more infectious (more easily transmitted) and there is some anecdotal evidence that it may cause more serious illness (though not more deaths). This variant is spreading rapidly among people who have not been vaccinated as well as those who have only had the first dose of a two-dose vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna). Individuals fully vaccinated with two-dose vaccines still appear to have robust protection against the Delta variant. The effectiveness of the Johnson & Johnson and AstraZeneca vaccines for this variant is not yet known (note: this does not suggest they are not effective against Delta, only that we don't have the data yet).

As of this writing, the Delta variant accounts for more than 20% of all cases in the US. It has quickly become the dominant variant in other countries, including India and the UK. What we know from observing its impact in other countries is that it spreads rapidly among those who are not fully vaccinated and is more likely to lead to hospitalization for those individuals. You can learn more about the Delta variant and vaccines here:

- Scientific American: [How dangerous is the Delta variant, and will it cause a COVID surge in the US?](#)

- Dear Pandemic: [So, who's getting COVID-19 these days?](#)
- Your Local Epidemiologist: [Delta variant, the UK, and implications for the US](#)
- Laurel Bristow, MSc: [Delta, etc.](#)
- Nini Munoz, PhD: [Vaccine Efficacy and Variants](#)

The bottom line? People who are fully vaccinated are strongly protected against the Delta variant as well as other known coronavirus variants, and people who are getting very sick and ending up in the hospital are typically unvaccinated or only partially vaccinated. Plus, the higher percentage of any community that is vaccinated, the lower the risk of transmission is for everyone in that community. We are requiring vaccination to protect everyone in the Olin community.

The Future of Olin Ahead

The Olin Ahead team was created last year in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As we return to regular operations in the fall, we expect Olin Ahead to phase out. Regardless, the College will continue to monitor, assess and respond to potential health threats as they become known. In the meantime, please continue to contact OlinAhead@olin.edu with your questions or concerns.

Thank you for your continued collaboration and cooperation in creating a safer Olin community.

-The Olin Ahead Team