

## Heard, Julia

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**From:** President Waded Cruzado <wcruzado@montana.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 12, 2022 8:01 AM  
**Subject:** MSU's COVID-19 protocols for the start of Spring Semester



**MONTANA**  
STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of the President

Dear MSU Community,

Welcome back to your university, Montana State! I hope each and every one of you had time with friends and family and an opportunity to rest and recharge before the start of classes on Wednesday, Jan. 19. While you were away, our Bobcat football team played in the FCS national championship for the first time since 1984! They made us all proud with an incredible season. Go 'Cats!

We enter our Spring Semester with enthusiasm, while acknowledging the presence of a new challenge in the Omicron variant of COVID-19. The Omicron variant is prevalent in Bozeman and Gallatin County, and there are an unprecedented number of COVID-19 cases in our community. While not as lethal as the initial variant and the ensuing Delta variant, Omicron is the most contagious version of COVID-19 up to this date.

Just as we have done successfully in the past, we will proceed cautiously, balancing public health considerations as well as the educational needs of our students. We at Montana State are committed to having an in-person semester. In order to make that happen, until further notice, we will stay the course in terms of our COVID-19 protocols.

The mask requirements of the Fall Semester will remain in place until revised. This means that face masks will continue to be required in all buildings on campus. We will keep in place the exception we made for the MSU Fitness Center, where the strenuous nature of exercising makes optional face masks a better practice. For simplicity's sake, unless we are outdoors or in the MSU Fitness Center, we will wear face masks in MSU buildings and facilities.

This requirement applies to every MSU student and to every member of the faculty and staff. As always, your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Why do we need to keep in place our face mask requirement? The Omicron variant is highly infectious, and there is only one comprehensive hospital in our community. We will do our part to avoid a situation in which an excessive number of COVID-19 cases strains our hospital capacity, affecting the ability

of our students, faculty, staff and community members to receive other types of care, such as surgeries, treatments for cancers, or hospitalization for injury or illness unrelated to COVID-19.

Just as with Fall Semester, if an MSU student needs a special accommodation regarding the requirement to wear a face mask indoors on campus, please contact the [MSU Office of Disability Services](#). If an MSU employee needs a special accommodation in regard to this requirement, please contact the [MSU Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) coordinator](#).

Thanks to the medical and administrative team of University Student Health Partners, we have COVID-19 vaccines to be administered, free of charge, to MSU faculty, students and staff. [Please make your appointment to get vaccinated or to get your booster shot](#). Free COVID-19 testing also remains available for students at our [Student Testing Center](#) near the northeast corner of Bobcat Stadium. Information on both vaccinations and testing is available at [montana.edu/coronavirus](http://montana.edu/coronavirus).

I wish you a good and productive semester.

Sincerely,



Waded Cruzado  
President, Montana State University

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