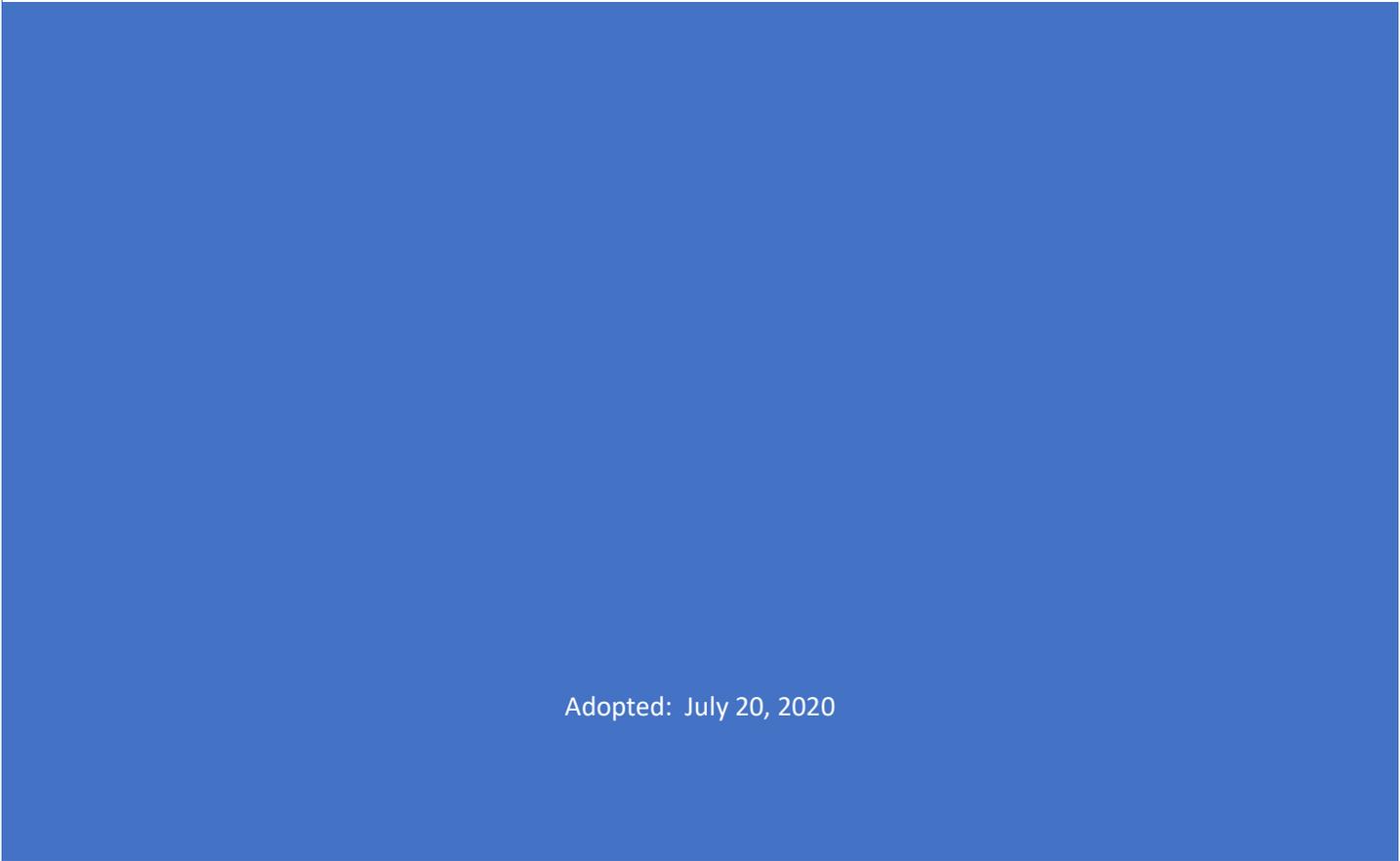




PROTECTING THE PRIDE:
RETURNING TO UAFS IN FALL 2020



Adopted: July 20, 2020

Protecting the Pride

University of Arkansas-Fort Smith officials are dedicated to providing the safest possible environment for living, learning, and working. As a result, we have created this plan to provide guidance and information about how we will work to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Based on the rapid increases in positive COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths in Arkansas and surrounding states, campus leaders, including representatives of Faculty Senate, Staff Council, and Student Government Association, have created a plan for resocialization which we believe will reduce the risk of community spread while allowing most employees and students to return to face-to-face education and engagement.

Medical and Governmental Guidance

UAFS has utilized the best medical information received from credible sources such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Arkansas Department of Health, and the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. Elements of the plan will adhere to relevant Federal, State of Arkansas, Sebastian County, and City of Fort Smith laws, ordinances, and directives. Other sources of information may be used for decision-making at the discretion of campus leaders and will be noted appropriately in this plan document.

Face-to-Face Education

In May, The Board of Trustees of the University of Arkansas voted unanimously to return to face-to-face education on the campuses of the universities and colleges they govern, including UA-Fort Smith. Given that directive, campus officials have worked diligently to determine the safest and best ways to provide on-campus and online instruction that will provide flexibility and protect those who are most vulnerable to severe outcomes if they contract COVID-19.

Changes to the Plan

Due to the dynamic and quickly-changing conditions of this global pandemic, organizational leaders will adapt and alter this plan as needed. Changes will be noted with the date and time of adoption clearly identified on page two (2) of this plan.

Plan Changes

7-25 – Updated definition of Close Contact per CDC

11-16 – Updated to include Post-Thanksgiving hours of operation

Definitions

In this section, we will define commonly used terms to add clarity to sections of the plan.

Close Contact: For COVID-19, [close contact](#) is defined as someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.

Contact Tracing: Identifying and monitoring people who may have come into contact with an infectious person. In the case of COVID-19, monitoring usually involves self-quarantine as an effort to control the spread of disease.

Disinfecting Wipe/Cleaner: For disinfection, most common EPA-registered household disinfectants and disinfectant wipes should be effective. A list of products that are EPA approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 is available [here](#).

Face Mask/Face Covering: According to the [Arkansas Department of Health](#), an effective **face covering** should fully **cover** your mouth and nose but also allow you to breathe freely.

Hand Sanitizer (also Anti-bacterial Hand Gel)— If soap and water are not available, CDC recommends consumers use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Isolation—Separating ill individuals from well individuals.

Mandatory: Actions required by all or of certain, defined parties. Failure to comply with mandatory procedures will result in disciplinary action for employees and students at UAFS and possible fines.

PPE (Personal Protective Equipment): Personal protective equipment, or PPE, is specialized clothing and equipment used as a safeguard against health hazards, including exposure to infectious diseases through physical contact or airborne particles. PPE is designed to protect parts of the body typically exposed in standard attire, including the nose, mouth, eyes, hands, and feet.

Quarantine—Separating well persons who have been exposed to COVID-19 from other well persons during the incubation period of the illness.

Self-Screening/Self-Monitoring—Daily self-review of symptoms consistent with COVID-19.

Social Distancing/Physical Distancing—Creating a distance between individuals of a minimum of six (6) feet to reduce community spread of COVID-19. A minimum of twelve (12) feet of distance between professors and students when lecturing without a mask or face shield.

Testing: A COVID-19 [viral test](#) tells you if you have a current infection. Viral tests check samples from your respiratory system, such as a swab from the inside of your nose, to tell you if you currently have an infection with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. Some test results

may be available at the testing site in less than an hour. Other tests must be sent to a laboratory to analyze, a process that takes 1–2 days once received by the lab.

Vaccine: A vaccine is a biological preparation of organisms that provides immunity to a particular infectious disease. Currently, there is no vaccine for COVID-19.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR FALL 2020

Classes will begin as scheduled on August 17.

As announced in the July Protecting the Pride return to campus plan, UAFS classes and activities, including final examinations, will take place remotely with few exceptions following the Thanksgiving break.*

- On-campus instruction will continue **through Tuesday, Nov. 24.**
- Campus is open but no classes will be held on **Wednesday, Nov. 25.**
- Campus is closed **Thursday Nov. 26 through Friday Nov. 27.**
- Instruction will be delivered online **from Monday, Nov. 30, through Thursday Dec. 3.**
- Reading Day will take place on **Friday, Dec. 4.**
- Final exams will be conducted in online format **Dec. 5–11.**
- A virtual commencement ceremony will take place at **10 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 12,** to honor and celebrate students who have met all degree requirements.
- Campus will be closed **Dec. 24 through Jan. 3.**

* Some exceptions for critical face-to-face instruction such as clinicals, skills testing, and practical training will continue after Thanksgiving. Faculty whose courses will continue in person after Monday, Nov. 30, will notify their students ASAP but no later than by **Friday, Nov. 20**

In addition to the transition to online coursework, ***non-essential staff will work remotely until Jan. 4, 2021.*** This remote work phase will be similar to the university's spring 2020 mode of operations. Please contact your supervisor if you have any questions.

Academic Facilities – Faculty members may have access to offices and laboratories as approved by their academic dean.

Meetings will continue to be conducted by phone or Microsoft Teams, Blackboard Collaborate, or other video or teleconferencing software. No face-to-face meetings will be scheduled.

The **Boreham Library** will be open:

- Nov. 30 through Dec. 6
 - Monday – Thursday: 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.
 - Friday: 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 - Saturday: 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
 - Sunday: 1 p.m. to 10 p.m.
- Dec. 7 through Dec. 13
 - Monday – Thursday: 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.
 - Friday: 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 - Saturday – Sunday: Closed
- Dec. 14 through Dec. 20
 - Monday – Friday: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 - Saturday – Sunday: Closed

- Dec. 21 through Dec. 23
 - Monday – Wednesday: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Box Office in the **Campus Center** will be open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday – Friday for students or visitors to get directions or drop off materials.

Offices located on the Campus Center’s second-floor -- including **Admissions**, the **R.O.A.R. First-Year Advising Center**, **Financial Aid**, **Registrar**, **Title IX**, and **Cashier** -- will be open 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday – Friday.

The **Campus Bookstore**, located on the first-floor of the Campus Center, will be open 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday – Friday.

Campus Tours may be scheduled, but available hours will be limited. Group sizes cannot exceed 10 people.

Career Services will be open but have limited staff available on-campus.

Food Service will be limited. The final day of campus food service will be Friday, Dec. 11.

- Lion’s Den Dining Hall
 - Monday-Thursday
 - Breakfast: 7:30-9 a.m.
 - Lunch: 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
 - Dinner: 4:30-8 p.m.
 - Friday
 - Breakfast: 7:15 – 10 a.m.
 - Lunch: 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
 - Dinner: 5 – 6:30 p.m.
 - Saturday – Sunday
 - Brunch: 10:30 am. – 1 p.m.
 - Dinner: 5 – 6 p.m.
- Food Court
 - Jack & Olive (Grab-n-Go): Closed
 - Two/12 (Pizza & Pasta): Close at 2 p.m.
 - Chick-fil-A: Close at 2 p.m.
 - Starbucks:
 - Monday – Thursday: 7 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.
 - Friday: 7 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Food Service will resume Sunday, Jan. 10, 2021 with brunch and dinner in the Lion’s Den Dining Hall.

The **Gordon Kelly Academic Success Center** will be open by appointment only 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. for Accuplacer and CLEP testing by UAFS students. The ASC is not available for in-person coaching, tutoring, study, or drop-in testing. Virtual coaching appointments and Brainfuse online tutoring are available. Students can also schedule remote Accuplacer tests with extended testing hours to be taken at home. Email ASC@uafs.edu for more information or to schedule an appointment.

The **Recreation and Wellness Center** will close at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 25, for the duration of the winter break and will reopen will at 6 a.m. Jan. 11, 2021, when students return for the spring semester.

The **Writing Center** will be open for online appointments:

- Nov. 30 through Dec. 11
 - Sunday: 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
 - Monday–Thursday: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
 - Friday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Dec. 11-23
 - Monday–Friday: 10 a.m. to noon and 2-5 p.m.
- Students can make an appointment online by visiting the [Writing Center website](#).

The **Student Life Office** will close on Nov. 30, but staff will be available online.

If you have concerns or questions about the availability of services or hours of operation for a department/office not listed, please contact that office/department directly. Have a safe and happy Thanksgiving!

To complete tests and exams online, students must have a webcam-enabled computer and a secure and stable internet connection. Please note that Chromebooks and Tablets are not compatible with Examity online testing.

If you have technology concerns of any kind, please complete this [technology survey](#). Staff will reach out to you to help meet your needs.

If you believe you may qualify for additional testing accommodations through the Americans with Disabilities Act, please Dana.andreassen@uafs.edu or call Ms. Andreassen at 479-7887677.

Expecting a surge of COVID-19 following the Thanksgiving holiday, which necessitates the move to online learning for the final two weeks of the Fall semester, the university has also made the difficult decision to **cancel in-person commencement for the Spring 2020 and Fall 2020 graduates.**

A comprehensive virtual commencement will take its place until the threat of COVID-19 has decreased, and restrictions on large gatherings have been lifted.

Employees should refer to the Phased Return to Work plan and may contact Human Resources for more information.

FLEXIBLE CLASSROOM EXPERIENCES

Recognizing the need to support students' academic experiences while accommodating varying individual health conditions and students who may not be able to travel back to campus this fall, UAFS will offer flexible learning options.

Courses will be classified as one of four delivery methods, combining online and virtual learning with on-campus classroom instruction where it can be provided safely and when it is essential to the curriculum:

- **Full Online** – All instruction online with no expectation of class attendance and asynchronous lectures and materials.
- **Synchronous Online*** – Full online delivery with required times for students to log in and join discussion and lecture.
- **Hybrid** – Mostly online with reduced class meeting schedule of at least 1/3 of standard time but no more than 2/3 of standard time.
- **Alternating Hybrid*** – Students will attend alternating sessions per week as directed by the professor. Example: For a MWF class, 1/3 of students attend class in person Monday, 1/3 Wednesday, 1/3 Friday.
(*New to UAFS)

Students who choose traditional learning styles will be expected to attend class and participate on campus; however, accommodations will be made on an as-needed basis for individual circumstances. Online courses may be synchronous or asynchronous in delivery.

You will be notified of your current course classifications on MyUAFS as well as by your faculty member individually. A team of advisers will be available to guide you through questions, concerns, or modifications as needed.

These options provide you with high-quality, intentionally designed educational experiences, support all learning outcomes, reduce density on campus, and create equitable, flexible learning opportunities.

If you wish to choose fully online courses but have technology needs, please complete this [technology survey](#).

SAFETY MEASURES

Mandatory use of Face Coverings or Face Masks

On July 16, Arkansas Governor Hutchinson signed an executive order requiring all Arkansans and guests to wear face coverings. We will adhere to the order on campus in the following scenarios:

- Inside University buildings, classrooms and public areas when 6' of physical distancing cannot be maintained or is not achievable,
- Outside of buildings, when 6' of physical distance cannot be maintained.
- Face coverings are not required while in one's own living space or private office; while dining; while participating in athletic or music events/classes; in other rare instances when wearing a mask interferes with student outcomes assessments such giving a speech during a speech class; and when reasonable accommodations are warranted under the ADA.

The university will have a limited supply of disposable masks available in the event students misplace or damage their masks on the way to classes. These masks will be available in main offices in each building, as well as at the Box Office in the Campus Center.

Communal/Public Spaces

Physical distancing in shared and common spaces can be especially challenging and may differ from building to building. Distancing may be accomplished by removing or rearranging furnishings or modifying workspaces, and/or practices. The University will assess spaces and determine the appropriate action to maintain safety.

Classrooms, laboratories, dining halls, and other gathering spaces will be reconfigured with lower occupancy rates to allow for social distancing during use. Where feasible, modifications to work practices and schedules will be considered for students, faculty, and staff.

Personal Responsibility

These changes will require difficult but necessary adjustments in personal behavior and responsibility. The policies shared here and those still to come will help us maintain a safe learning and working environment for all students and employees.

We expect that all community members will:

- Wear a face mask or cover at all times when in public spaces and unable to maintain a physical distance from others.
- Maintain physical distancing of six feet or more, whenever possible.
- Wash hands frequently and thoroughly for at least 20 seconds with soap and water.
- Ensure regular use of hand sanitizer in-between hand washings.
- Cover one's mouth and nose if coughing or sneezing.

- Avoid participation in gatherings larger than stated guidelines and where social distancing cannot be maintained.

Daily Self-Screening Requirement

All employees and students will be required to monitor health conditions daily. People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure to the virus**. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell • Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19.

For an online self-checker, please see this CDC website to use their interactive, confidential tool: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/testing/index.html>

Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols

Custodial teams have prepared enhanced daily cleaning and disinfecting protocols based on the CDC and Department of Health guidelines. Cleanings will be frequent in campus buildings, common areas, high-touch surfaces, offices, and workspaces. In addition, the following can be expected:

- Our plant operations team will maintain hand sanitizer stations at major building entrances, elevator stops, and high-traffic areas.
- All faculty, staff, and students will be encouraged to wipe down commonly used surfaces before individual use with readily available products that meet the Environmental Protection Agency's criteria for use against COVID-19 and are appropriate for the surface.
- Individuals will be encouraged to sanitize laptops, cellphones, telephone headsets, and any other personal devices daily.

PPE

UAFS has ordered PPE for each faculty and staff as follows:

- 2 each--reusable face coverings

- 1 each-- 32 oz. can of Lysol
- 1 each-- tub containing 300 disinfecting wipes (2 tubs for faculty)
- 1 each--8 oz. personal hand sanitizer
- 1 each—Face Shield

Centrally located in main offices throughout campus, the following PPE will be available:

- Disposable masks
- No touch thermometers with batteries
- Disposable gloves
- Disposable gowns
- First Aid Kits

Other PPE available:

- Hand sanitizer stations in each building—locations shown on this page <https://campuslife.uafs.edu/services/sanitizer>
- Disinfecting wipes—available at the entrances of each building

Testing, Contact Tracing and Reporting

- **COVID-19 Testing** will be available through the Arkansas Department of Health and with local hospitals and clinics with which we create Memorandums of Agreement (MOA). The UAFS Health Clinic will not conduct testing due to a lack of testing equipment and supplies.
- Test samples will either be sent to the State of Arkansas lab in Little Rock or a more local laboratory. Results will be communicated to the patient and to the Arkansas Department of Health.
- **Contact Tracing** will be conducted through the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) and possibly enhanced by trained contact tracers in close proximity to campus.
The University is not responsible for contact tracing, and university employees should not disclose the positive status of students or other employees.

Vulnerable populations

We recognize that some students, faculty, and staff may be more vulnerable, identifying with one of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) categories for increased risk of severe illness.

Vulnerable community members should consult the [CDC's extra precautions](#). Students may contact Dana Andreassen with the UAFS ADA office at Dana.Andreassen@uafs.edu or 479-7887677. Employees may contact the Office of Human Resources at 479-788-7080.

HOUSING, DINING AND RESIDENTIAL LIFE

Our Office of Housing and Residential Life has extended the move-in schedule to comfortably allow our residential students space and time to set up their home on campus.

Residence Halls

The Housing team has implemented a variety of modifications to protect student health and well-being, including:

- All triple occupancy rooms have been reduced to double-occupancy rooms.
- Students residing on campus will be required to complete a Health and Safety Addendum to their housing contract, including a commitment to follow all safety guidelines.
- Our residential staff will be trained on all CDC guidelines, assisting in the creation of a safe residential environment.
- Visitation in residence halls will be restricted to ensure that exposure risks are minimized.
- Face masks will not be required of residents when in their individual rooms. In common areas, residents will be required to maintain proper social distancing and use face coverings as added protection.

All students who live on campus beginning in August will receive one (1) reuseable cloth face covering as well as an 8-ounce bottle of hand sanitizer.

Students can expect continued programs and activities with fellow residents, following all CDC and Arkansas State Department of Health guidelines for reduced density and social distancing.

Dining on Campus

To ensure social distancing, we will adjust dining services to accommodate enhanced grab-and-go dining options and socially distant seating. While details are still being confirmed throughout our dining facilities on campus, we expect the following modifications:

- Redesigned seating layouts and capacity restrictions
- Increased grab-and-go options and elimination of self-serve food stations in favor of served stations
- Use of compostable dining products such as cups and plates
- Availability of pre-packaged condiments, utensils, napkins, and cups for diners, removing common stations
- Cleaning and sanitizing of tables after each use

STUDENT ACTIVITIES ON CAMPUS

The Student Life Office is excited to welcome students back to campus and is planning ways to serve and engage all, including those who may be vulnerable to infection or unable to come to campus. Traditional events will be modified and, as possible, will be presented online as well.

In order to ensure proper health and safety protocols are met, you can expect the following:

- Gatherings will be limited in size to meet state regulations and may be offered in a hybrid format to allow students who cannot attend in person to engage virtually.
- Virtual meetings and events will be encouraged and supported so all students can participate.
- Protective face masks and coverings will be required of all participants during events and meetings.
- Proper social distancing of six feet or will be required during events where masks cannot be safely worn.
- The Recreation and Wellness Center (RAWC) will follow state guidelines for gyms, with additional precautions determined by the RAWC Staff, and the UAFS Health and Safety Task Force. [RAWC Guidelines can be found here.](#)

Student life, including RSOs, recreational activities, student gatherings, career services, support services, and more, are important to creating the university experience and helping all Lions find their place at UAFS. No matter the format, UAFS Student Life Office will continue to support students in building connections and fostering friendships.

CHANGES ON CAMPUS

This fall, you'll see a number of changes designed to protect the health of our community. Relying on the guidance of our local and state public health officials and the UAFS teams for public health and safety and infrastructure and operations, we're planning for the following adjustments this fall:

- Six-foot distance markers, to help everyone follow social distancing protocol, where lines commonly form.
- One-way directional signage in walkways and stairways, to minimize close contact in confined spaces, at select locations
- [Hand sanitizer will be readily available in all common spaces](#) (e.g., lobbies, lounges, and classrooms).
- Important safety signage, to remind our community of recommended hygiene practices and the importance of symptom checking
- Plexiglass barriers, to provide added protection for employees and students, at select locations

TUITION AND FEES

The Board of Trustees for the University of Arkansas approves all tuition and fees rates. UAFS is not authorized to charge more or less than the authorized amounts, nor can university officials waive charges of tuition or other fees. If at any time the Board of Trustees authorizes reductions, waivers, or refunds due to COVID-19, a message will be sent to all faculty, staff, and students immediately.

Students who enroll in face-to-face courses that unexpectedly transition to online or hybrid format before August 17 will not be charged distance education fees for those courses. However, students who knowingly enroll in an online or hybrid course from the start will be charged the distance education fees.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Hours of operation in some facilities or programs may change or may be reduced due to limited personnel available. Hours that facilities are open or available may be different than in previous semesters. Hours of operation will be posted on departmental websites as changes occur.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Frequently asked questions from students, faculty, staff, and community members will be answered on the UAFS COVID-19 FAQ page.

<https://campuslife.uafs.edu/services/healthcenter/covid19>

Additional questions may be sent to Communications@UAFS.edu for inclusion on the page.

REFERENCES

Arkansas Department of Health

<https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programsservices/topics/novel-coronavirus>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019nCoV/index.html>