

The fall semester is nearly complete and we are truly grateful to have experienced a manageable level of COVID-19 cases while we opened the campus to full in-person instruction and campus activities with no restrictions.

COVID case numbers on campus were less than we saw at many universities – some of which had restrictions or vaccine requirements in place. We ended up having about 5% of our on-campus student body reporting that they tested positive for COVID-19 sometime during the semester. Thankfully, we did not see severe symptoms among those cases in this younger age demographic. And our isolation, quarantine and contact tracing protocols helped prevent further spread of the coronavirus.

Last week, there were 19 active cases among students and employees, which is pretty consistent with what we have seen since October.

An initial surge in COVID cases at the start of the semester was expected, as were much smaller increases right after Halloween and Thanksgiving. We could experience another increase at the start of the spring semester as students return after travelling over the Christmas break and engaging with family and friends, although we don't expect it to be anywhere near the level that we saw in September.

What to do if you test positive while on break

If you do test positive while on Christmas break, please call the COVID Hotline at 602-639-7300 opt#1. The COVID Hotline is available 7 days a week from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

As always, please continue to follow healthy hygiene habits during the Christmas break and when you return: wash and sanitize your hands often, participate in testing and contact tracing as necessary, perform daily wellness checks and stay home if you are ill.

Spring semester policies

We are closely monitoring the current rise in COVID cases across the country and the status of the new Omicron variant, but have no plans to alter our current campus policies regarding COVID-19. That means continued in-person instruction and activities without restrictions. Continue monitoring the [GCU COVID web page](#) for updates.

Booster shots

The CDC still highly recommends vaccinations and booster shots and recently extended the booster recommendation to anyone age 16 and over. GCU also encourages vaccinations and boosters but it is not required for students or employees.

If you would like to receive a vaccine or booster, call or email the health center at 602-639-6215 or healthcenter@gcu.edu to make an appointment.

Testing site

The Premier Labs walk-up testing site at the Trails parking lot (near the former First Southern Baptist Church) remains open during the Christmas break.

- Through Dec. 21: Regular hours (8 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays; 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday)
- Dec. 22-24 hours: 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

- Dec. 25-26: Closed
- Dec. 27-31: 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Jan. 1-2: Closed
- Regular hours resume Jan. 3

Both antigen and PCR tests are available, with antigen test results available within 30 minutes and PCR results taking 24-48 hours.

We hope you have a very Merry Christmas and enjoy your time during the break. We look forward to seeing everyone again in January, 2022!