Gatherings & Events Working Group Executive Summary

The Path Forward Gatherings & Events Working Group is developing guidelines for gatherings and events, including meetings, in University-owned or controlled space, following physical distancing and other protocols established by the Protective Measures Working Group. All in-person events will need to be evaluated for feasibility and whether the same objectives can be achieved through a virtual gathering. Given the spacing requirement of six feet between individuals, and the state’s definition of mass gatherings, space allocation will need to be carefully considered. Recognizing the need for some in-person experiences as essential to our educational mission and to the student campus experience, there will be a need to prioritize space for students while encouraging faculty and staff to continue the practice of virtual meetings whenever possible.

Assumptions: Gatherings & Events

- Physical distancing requirements will be in place until 2021 and possibly beyond, limiting the number of people in a given space.
- Public Health guidelines need to be followed related to spacing of people, wearing face coverings, cleaning surfaces between events, etc. for all gatherings. This will decrease the density of groups and the maximum allowable size of all campus gatherings and events, including meetings.
- In-person gatherings with an audience of students and/or potential students will be prioritized in campus spaces.
- Many, if not all, requests for space in fall 2020 will need to be canceled or amended, given the requirements for physical distancing and the need to prioritize space for the highest priority purposes that cannot be achieved by virtual means.
- Maximum size of gatherings will be based on public health guidelines and space occupancy limits determined by physical distancing principles. Inside spaces (meeting rooms, etc.) will have a capacity approximately 30 percent of normal capacity based upon recommendations from Public Health - Dayton and Montgomery County.
- Outside spaces (Central Mall, Humanities Plaza, etc.) also will have limits based on current public health guidelines and physical distancing principles.
- The Division of Athletics will announce its plan about gatherings and events, including the use of UD Arena, at a later date. Those plans will follow public health guidelines as well as guidelines established by the NCAA and the respective teams' conferences.
- Plans for classroom space will differ; please consult guidelines from the Path Forward Academics Working Group when they are available.
- This guidance is for University gatherings and events only and does not apply to or sanction impromptu informal social gatherings, including those in University-owned residences, which also must adhere to local and state limitations on the size of gatherings plus public health guidelines on face coverings and physical distancing. Visit the state of Ohio's COVID-19 website for current public health orders governing physical distancing, face coverings and attendance.
Recommendations: Gatherings & Events

1. University leadership will instruct all units to examine fall plans to determine which gatherings and events, including meetings, produce a benefit that justifies an in-person delivery, which should be virtual, and which should be suspended for fall semester.

2. An in-person campus space request process should be implemented, utilizing the 1850 software platform. The tool in 1850 will include information about viable and engaging alternatives to gathering in-person.
   a. To request space for an in-person gathering or event, all recognized student organizations will need approval from the Center for Student Involvement. This will include a risk-benefit analysis related to an in-person vs. virtual gathering.
   b. To request space for an in-person gathering or event, including a meeting, all faculty and staff will need approval from their department/program:center to submit a request. This will include a risk-benefit analysis related to an in-person vs. virtual gathering.

3. Academic classrooms and auditoriums will be made available for campus meetings and events when not being utilized for classes. Some spaces typically not used as classrooms may be designated as such.

4. An ad hoc group will be charged by UD leadership to review and make priority decisions regarding requests for space for in-person gatherings. Special consideration should be given to gatherings that include first-year students.

5. An ad hoc group will be created that includes those who manage campus spaces in order to coordinate the needs of approved space requests.

6. Any groups using campus space for a gathering may need to take attendance in case contact tracing is needed (recommendations to be finalized by Public Health - Dayton and Montgomery County).

Questions: Gatherings & Events

Can I still schedule a meeting room for my meeting or program?
Maybe. Space will be limited in the fall, and the spaces we use will accommodate fewer people because of the six-foot physical distancing that will be required. Further, public health guidelines may change applicable limitations. The campus will be asked to consider other ways of achieving programming outcomes rather than booking a room as though it were “business as usual.” When we consider the priorities on campus, we have to think about how students will need to be involved and engaged outside of the classroom. Some of that can be online, but we’ll need to be creative about providing some in-person experiences that continue to follow the guidelines established by Public Health - Dayton and Montgomery County.

Do all scheduled events, including meetings, need approval?
All scheduled gatherings and events, including meetings, should be approved by department/program/center leadership, keeping in mind the need to evaluate the necessity of in-person gatherings. All student organizations must use the 1850 platform to schedule/get approval for all events. Faculty/staff should review the list of spaces on campus that require the use of the 1850 scheduling/approval platform and plan accordingly to acquire necessary approval and to secure space reservations.
If we cannot host large gatherings, what are students going to be doing outside of the classroom?
Great question. Faculty, staff, and students have been actively thinking about this and planning for the fall. We recognize students come to UD for a holistic experience that involves gathering together and learning from each other. Some of this can be done online, but we will also develop ways for students to gather, have fun, meet other students, and engage in campus opportunities (six feet apart, of course).

Do I need to cancel my event I already scheduled?
The University may cancel events in spaces not able to safely physically distance participants. However, alternative arrangements may be made to safely accommodate your event, depending on available space. If you reserved space for a gathering, event or meeting this fall, review the new capacities based on physical distancing, and think about remote or virtual alternatives. If you would like to cancel the reservation, contact the appropriate office. If you determine an in-person gathering is crucial, get approval from your department/program/center and complete the required form in 1850 (1850.udayton.edu) starting Aug. 1.

Is there a priority list for who gets to schedule rooms?
An ad-hoc group will be charged by UD leadership to review and make priority decisions regarding requests for space for in-person gatherings. Special consideration should be given to gatherings that include first-year students. Decisions will be made based on the ability to safely physically distance in the room and the need to provide an in-person experience that cannot be effectively provided in another way.

Why can’t I plan a gathering for the size of a wedding reception, which is 300 people?
Wedding receptions and a few other types of gatherings have been given exemptions under the State of Ohio’s orders restricting mass gatherings. UD will use the principle of physical distance as the priority for determining maximum sizes of gathered groups. The maximum group size will be determined by the capacity of the space with physical distancing and public health guidelines in place at the time.

Feedback from Town Hall: Gatherings & Events

How was the plan revised based on feedback from Town Halls:
- Factored in the effect of decisions on events and gatherings on first-year students.
- Recognition that some departmental meetings are confidential and may require space for an in-person gathering.

Feedback given that was not incorporated into the plan, and why:
- Challenges/obstacles/things yet to be decided:
- Are all currently scheduled events for fall 2020 canceled?
  - Departments that schedule space will be reviewing scheduled events and contacting departments and student organizations as needed.
- Will UD rent vacant office space downtown (recommend that, if rented, space be on the Flyer Ride route), recognizing that this would likely be in response to a specific need?
  - This is a broader question for the University to consider, if needed.
- Will UD rent tents for additional outdoor gathering space?
  - Tents continue to be discussed as a possible alternative to indoor spaces or to provide a larger space for approved gatherings.