

August 26, 2021

B.C. Universities and Institutes Working Toward Enhancing COVID-19 Response with Vaccination and Rapid Testing

Victoria, BC – August 26, 2021 – BC’s Institutes and Teaching Universities welcome the recent provincial government announcements on mandatory masks and a proof of vaccine program, which have been key concerns within our communities as we plan for a full return to campus in September. We have continued to advance toward resolution to those concerns in our discussions with the provincial government and public health officials, while at the same time being cognizant of the need to provide choice for community members.

While we are well aware that a significant majority of our campus community have already been vaccinated and all safety precautions are in place for the September start, we are also working with public agencies toward offering our own additional measures for educational activities beyond those covered by the provincial proof of vaccine program, including rapid testing for our community members who have not yet been vaccinated against COVID-19, or who choose not to disclose their vaccine status.

We recognize that we need to allow for a transition period to give all community members an opportunity to access vaccinations. Developing and implementing this initiative will require ongoing dialogue with students, faculty and staff associations and unions.

We are confident that these additional measures will augment the already high numbers who have been vaccinated. Recent surveys of students, staff and faculty at several institutions have revealed very high vaccination rates, which give confidence as we enter the academic year.

To all community members, we strongly recommend that you become vaccinated before returning to campus. As a reminder, in BC, vaccines are available to everyone aged 12 and older, including students arriving from international destinations, who can receive their vaccinations after arriving in Canada. You can learn more at <https://immunizebc.ca>.

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About BCAIU

BCAIU members generate, develop and support adoption of initiatives that positively influence change in higher education. We offer a compelling approach to learning by integrating teaching excellence, work integrated learning and co-op experiences, ladder educational pathways and stack-able credentials. We provide skills development that learners need to succeed in their career as well as in-demand skills training.

Our member institutions are regionally located providing access to post-secondary education within local communities while at the same time offering a unique learning experience for learners from outside of British Columbia and from around the world.

BCAIU members include:

Vancouver Island University, University of the Fraser Valley, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Capilano University, Yukon University, Emily Carr University of Art & Design, British Columbia Institute of Technology, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology and Justice Institute of British Columbia.