



# EDWARD WATERS UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT | A. ZACHARY FAISON, JR., J.D.

January 31, 2022

Dear Edward Waters University Community:

As of tomorrow classes for the spring 2022 academic term at Edward Waters University (EWU) will have been underway for exactly two weeks and I want to thank our entire academic family of students, faculty, and staff for their collaboration through what has been a successful check-in process and overall start of the new semester and calendar year. As of the close of registration, this semester has yielded another remarkably high enrollment mark at just under 1000 students enrolled for the spring term (up 16.1% over Spring 2021) and an 82% overall retention rate amongst our EWU students (Fall 2021 to Spring 2022).

Accordingly, and as was formerly shared with you in late December 2021, EWU made the decision to open the current semester with classes and on-campus events being held exclusively on-line in response to what at the time was a surge in record level COVID-19 infections here in Jacksonville, throughout our state, and nationally via the omicron variant. In particular, and to slow the spread within our own community, we established a framework of specific operational adjustments to protect against the onset and potential growth in COVID-19 cases in the EWU community at the height of the COVID-19 omicron surge. Our goal was to limit the spread of the new variant and minimize disruption to the academic year and because of your vigilance we were able to successfully mitigate any mass onset or spread of the COVID-19 virus in our EWU community as we opened the new academic term.

Further, and as was noted in our December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021 correspondence, COVID-19 operational **protocols remain subject to change as we continuously monitor developments related to the COVID-19 virus** and its attendant variants pursuant to direction from local and national health agencies and organizations.

Towards that end, as promised, the university has continued to monitor the latest COVID-19 infection rates and hospitalization data locally and throughout Florida while also consulting with local public health experts and monitoring CDC reports to understand the trajectory of the virus. The latest reports indicate that the omicron surge and attendant infections and hospitalizations have plateaued and begun to decrease locally and throughout the state. Relatedly, all returning on-campus EWU students successfully completed COVID-19 testing as a part of the check-in/move-in process with nearly 100% of students testing negative for COVID-19 and the university again began and will continue offering campus-wide COVID-19 testing, vaccinations and boosters on-campus free of charge to all students, faculty, and staff twice weekly (Wednesdays and Thursdays 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.) in the Student Union Building.

As a result, and after having first assessed the most recent COVID-19 data in Jacksonville and the State of Florida while also consulting with a number of university stakeholders **EWU has made the decision to resume in-person classes and campus events/activities (still observing mask mandates and physical distancing requirements) beginning February 14, 2022.**

As such, beginning, Monday, February 14, 2022 the following processes and protocols will be in place:

#### EWU Students

- Beginning Monday, February 14, 2022 delivery of all traditional academic undergraduate courses will be taught in-person unless you voluntarily enrolled in a course that was previously designated to be taught via an online format (with the 'ON' designation on course schedules, e.g., ENGL 1101-ON01).
- Student residence halls will remain open as planned throughout the remainder of the Spring 2022 semester. Students who elected of their own choice to delay their return to campus, will need to contact the Office of Residence Life and Housing to schedule their move-in date and time. Additional campus housing information will soon be communicated directly to those residential students who have not yet returned to their on-campus residence hall.

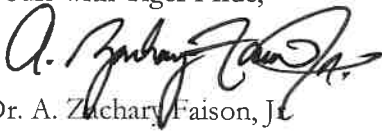
#### EWU Faculty & Staff

- Per the December 31, 2022 correspondence sent to all university employees **all faculty and staff are required to receive a vaccination booster**. All faculty and staff must submit proof of a vaccination booster (if you have not submitted a personal declination request) **by today, January 31, 2022**. Vaccination boosters are available free of charge on campus to all faculty and staff. Please contact the Office of Human Resources for specific questions or concerns;
- We will continue to **require the campus mask mandate for all students, faculty, and staff** regardless of vaccination status.

In addition, please note that the official platform for all university communications remains your university e-mail, the university website, and university social media outlets. As such, you **should expect to receive any additional information with further attendant and more specific details as is necessary regarding forthcoming operational adjustments impacting students from university leadership who provide oversight of the Divisions of Academic Affairs; Enrollment Management; Student Success and Engagement; Athletics; Finance, Administration and Business Innovation; and/or the Office of Human Resources for university employees**. Also, please be reminded that general information along with contact information to resolve COVID-19 operations related questions and to receive assistance will also soon be updated and provided via the university's COVID-19 Response Center webpage on the university website at [www.ewc.edu/covid](http://www.ewc.edu/covid).

Finally, as President I thank you in advance for your cooperation, commitment, and continuing efforts towards achieving even greater success at Florida's '*Destination Institution of Emerging Eminence*' in this new semester and year.

Yours with Tiger Pride,



Dr. A. Zachary Faison, Jr.  
President & CEO