

## Tulane announces plans for spring 2021 semester

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Tulane's first day of classes in the spring will be Jan. 19, the original start day for the semester. Students will be scheduled to return the week before classes start in order to begin COVID-19 screening via the university's off-campus Arrival Center, which will begin operations on Jan. 8.

With little over a month remaining in an on-ground, in-person semester that many believed would never happen, Tulane University [has announced its plans](#) for the spring 2021 semester.

“We continue to learn about the most effective COVID-19 protocols for our community and how to successfully implement them,” Tulane President Michael Fitts said. “And, we are using this knowledge and experience as we plan for the best possible spring for our students, faculty and staff.”

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The university will observe the Carnival break Feb. 15 and 16, in keeping with the city of New Orleans’ holiday schedule. There will be no spring break, but there will be two or three additional days with no classes spread throughout the semester. The last day of classes will be May 3.

Final exams, which will be held in-person and not online like they were this semester, will take place May 6 - May 11. As usual, students in residence halls will be expected to stay until their last final is over. [Commencement](#) will take place May 22, as originally scheduled.

“These are the broad brushstrokes of our upcoming semester. There will be many more details to come in following weeks and all of our plans are contingent on local, state and federal safety recommendations and requirements,” Fitts said.

Throughout the current semester Tulane has enforced safe practices on its campuses to protect both the Tulane community and city residents. The university’s actions were informed by guidance from local, state and federal health officials as well as data the university collected over the course of the semester and feedback from a campus-wide survey.

Tulane has had weeks of significantly lower positivity rates (lower than both the city and state). However, Fitts stressed that the university is not “letting our guard down.”

“All of our health safety protocols, including face coverings, social distancing, hand hygiene and restrictions on large gatherings will continue as before – they are the means that keep us safe,” Fitts said.

He added that the university would also maintain its recently increased testing schedule for students (twice weekly for undergraduates living both on and off campus and every other week for graduate/professional students both on and off-campus).

“We know that quickly identifying/isolating positive cases and quarantining close contacts is the best way, after health safety protocols, to reduce the spread of COVID-19. To maintain the low positivity rates we are now experiencing, we must be more vigilant than ever,” Fitts said.

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