



SEA Fall Program Planning: COVID-19

As we prepare for fall programs, Sea Education Association (SEA) continues to monitor advice from the Centers for Disease Control and the World Health Organization, helping to guide our thinking during the Covid-19 pandemic. Likewise, we are and will continue to follow all requirements and modifications as set forth by the governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. At this point we believe fall programs will include alterations as listed below. However, we will continue to modify and amend our protocols and practices as new information becomes available.

Risk Assessment

Our program model has always involved relatively small classes delivered by a dedicated faculty in a generally closed & contained environment. But even with the precautions and modifications mentioned above, they offer more risk than staying home—but likely less than joining a larger cohort of students on a bigger campus. Students and families must make informed decisions about how much risk makes sense for them. SEA will strive to do what it can to minimize exposure, but the assumption of some risk is inherent in experiential programming and comes with an added dimension this year. Please feel free to contact Virginia Land McGuire, Associate Dean for Student Services, with specific questions you may have after reviewing this document. Email her directly at vland@sea.edu.

Testing

SEA is hopeful that on-demand testing will be available in September, offering students and families an assurance of community health in SEA Semester programs. If this is the case, ideally students will be asked to arrive on our campus with documentation of a negative test and to be tested again prior to boarding the vessel. Our current working model also involves requiring all students & faculty to keep a 14-day self-monitoring log to record daily temperature checks and a daily health log prior to the first day of the program.

Isolation & Distancing

Once on campus, students and their teaching faculty will form an isolated community, interacting only with one another for the duration of their time on campus to help maintain the integrity of the group such that they can board the ship together in good health. To this end, we will not be able to allow family or other visitors to campus this fall. On campus, students will be lodged in single rooms with shared single-occupancy bathrooms. It is likely that all personnel will be required to wear facial coverings while indoors and when unable to maintain 6' of distance outdoors. Spacing between desks will be increased to allow at least 6' between students. We also hope to take advantage of the typically lovely fall weather to hold as many class meetings as possible outside.

Aboard Ship

To begin the sea component, students will join a professional ship's crew which will also have maintained a 14-day (minimum) period of isolation prior to student arrival. Current voyage plans involve operations that are near-coastal with ready access to health care for a period of 14 days before sailing offshore.

Like our academic partners, students, and families, we are assessing, on a daily basis, what makes good sense and what we can and should do both to protect community and global health and to provide the impactful programming that has been our hallmark for nearly fifty years. At this time, we are optimistic, and we will remain responsive and realistic, prioritizing student health and safety in all operations through this dynamic time.