Higher Ed COVID-19 Tracker

Findings Update – Thursday, June 4th

Latest Trends and Headlines

Trend Category	Trend Summary	Today's Headlines
A) Re-opening Operations	Universities continue to announce expectations for fall operating plans.	▪ Stanford University announced plans to allow two classes of undergraduates to return to school in each quarter of the 2020-21 academic year. Details including which classes will be on campus during which quarters are still developing. ▪ Georgia Tech will begin Phase I of its facilities reopening plan, which includes rules allowing student-athletes to use on campus athletics facilities. ▪ The University of Alabama system is developing re-entry plans that include the required use of an online symptom tracker by all students and employees. Meanwhile, Syracuse University is developing plans that include testing dorm wastewater twice a week for coronavirus. ▪ Three Oklahoma State University football players tested positive for coronavirus shortly after returning to campus. Similarly, 15 cadets who returned to West Point ahead of President Trump's commencement speech scheduled for June 13 tested positive.
B) Student Impact, Admissions & Enrollment	Universities are responding to unprecedented enrollment challenges due to pandemic's impact on student decisions.	▪ No new updates for today's *Tracker.*
C) Financial Impact and Response Actions	Universities have enacted spending freezes, furloughs/layoffs, and closures to address the financial impact of the pandemic.	▪ The Ohio State University developed an interim budget for the first two months of FY21 that will provide the university flexibility while confronting the budget challenges caused by COVID-19.
D) Research Re-entry	Universities have begun developing plans to re-engage in research activities. **Feature:* The Huron RES Team published a white paper summarizing team discussions with more than 25 institutions about how they are managing the research ramp up process. (see end of *Tracker* for more detail)	▪ The University of Utah is currently operating at its "orange alert" risk level that allows human subjects research to continue, provided that participant visits occur remotely. In-person research visits and enrollment are only permitted under strict safety parameters. ▪ Clemson University enters phase 1 of their plan to return to campus operations, allowing employees to return to their workspaces if their work cannot be performed remotely. Researchers who cannot continue their work remotely must receive permission to access research space in phase 2 by June 8.
E) Potential Transformation	The pandemic could accelerate transformational change in	▪ The Chronicle sat down for a conversation with E. Gordon Gee to discuss how to create sustainable

	to Higher Education	higher education.	change in higher education. E. Gordon Gee is currently president of West Virginia University but has also held more university presidencies than any other American.
F)	**Other Headlines and Emerging**	As universities continue to operate through the pandemic, all stakeholders – direct and indirect – will experience an impact.	▪ Researchers at Michigan State University have been awarded grants from the National Science Foundation to perform essential COVID-19 research. ▪ The University of California announced $2M in seed funding to support research aimed at mitigating the impact of COVID-19, particularly for high-risk populations. ▪ This Medium article questions Brown University's decision to cut their men's Track & Field team – one of their most racially diverse sports – in light of recent race protests.

Today's Headlines Summaries

A. Re-Opening Operations

▪ Stanford Plans to House Half of Undergrads On Campus per Quarter Next School Year
  o Stanford will allow the equivalent of two classes of undergraduates to return to campus in each quarter of the 2020-21 academic year, including summer 2021.
    - Undergraduates will be offered two quarters of housing and will be expected to complete another quarter remotely.
    - First-year students will reside on campus in the fall and seniors will reside on campus in the spring; otherwise, no other details have been determined regarding which students will be on campus for which quarters.
    - Students on campus will live in private sleeping systems such as singles and two-room doubles with private sleeping spaces. No decision is expected on the undergraduate college until later in June.
  o The majority of undergraduate teaching is expected to remain online, including for classes larger than 50 students.
  o Other social distancing measures will be in place including a "likely" requirement for face coverings and limitations on social gatherings.
  o Graduate and professional education is expected to move forward "at near-full capacity".

▪ Georgia Tech Athletics to Begin Phase I of Facilities Reopening Plan on June 15
  o Georgia Tech athletics will begin Phase I of its facilities reopening plan on June 15 allowing student-athletes in the Atlanta area to utilize on-campus weight rooms and athletic training facilities, albeit on a voluntary basis.
  o A variety of policies related to sanitizing equipment, limiting group size, temperature checks, and more will be in place.

▪ COVID-Tracking App Could be Key to University of Alabama Reopening, including College Football
  o The three campuses comprising the University of Alabama system – Tuscaloosa, Birmingham, and Huntsville – are working on a re-entry plan that includes plans that would require all students and employees to use an online symptom tracker and also encourage them to use a free contact tracing app.
    - The online symptom tracker would require employees and students to check in daily and report any symptoms. They are also required to complete an online course on the basics of safety and hygiene.
    - The contact tracing app would use Bluetooth signals rather than GPS location or other data.

▪ Syracuse University, ESF will Test Sewage Dorm-by-Dorm to Track Coronavirus Spread
  o Syracuse plans to test the sewage of each dorm twice a week citing that it is a more efficient and easier way than testing every student.
    - Syracuse does acknowledge that testing the water will not tell them how many students or which students have coronavirus.

- Oklahoma State Football Players Test Positive for COVID-19
  - Three OSU football players tested positive for coronavirus shortly after returning to campus ahead of the NCAA-designated start date of June 15.
    - All three players were asymptomatic.
    - OSU planned for students to return two weeks ahead of the NCAA-designated start date to allow for the probability of needing to quarantine some players and/or staff.

- 15 West Point Cadets Test Positive for Coronavirus
  - 15 cadets who returned to campus ahead of President Trump's commencement speech, planned for June 13, tested positive for coronavirus.
    - All 15 cadets were asymptomatic.
    - West Point says they were prepared with mandatory screenings for all cadets who arrived on campus and have only had 1.5% of all screenings test positive.
  - The Naval Academy did not recall it's graduating midshipmen to Annapolis, Md., for a commencement speech due to risk of the virus while the Air Force Academy locked down its senior class on campus and continued with plans for Vice President Pence to deliver his speech back in April.

B. Student Impact, Admissions & Enrollment

- No new updates for today's *Tracker.*

C. Financial Impact and Response Actions

- The Ohio State University: Interim Budget, Furlough Policy, Compensation-Increase Pause, Student Support
  - Ohio State developed an interim budget for the first two months of FY21 (July and August) that will help them achieve $58M in cost savings for the general campuses and $45M for the Wexner Medical Center.
    - The university is testing scenarios for beyond the first two months that incorporate 5%, 10%, and 20% reductions.
  - Ohio State is predicting a loss of $300M in revenue sources and plans to reduce the shortfall by:
    - A hiring pause with exceptions to essential services and key faculty and research positions
    - A pause to some capital projects
    - A pause in off-cycle salary increases
    - A restriction on university travel
    - Greater stringency around non-essential procurement and other operating expenditures
    - The use of limited strategic cash reserves and the availability of federal stimulus funds via the CARES Act

D. Research Re-Entry

- The University of Utah: Central Research Operations Guidance for Research Planning and Continuity
  - Orange level is the second-highest level on the university's four color-coded risk guide.
  - The university will continue human subjects research provided participants are remotely seen when possible. In-person research visits and enrollment are allowed if participants show no signs of infection and visits cannot be performed remotely or in conjunction with a clinical visit.
  - Researchers must complete a checklist detailing their departments' PPE and workspace COVID-19 preparation and prevention plans.

- Clemson University: The Road Forward for Clemson: A Return to Campus Operations
  - The university has a three-phase reentry plan, and each phase will last approximately 14 days to assess and monitor the school's COVID-19 trends.
  - Phase 1 allows employees to return to their workspaces if their work cannot be performed remotely. Researchers who cannot continue their work remotely must receive permission to access research space in Phase 2 from the Vice President for Research by June 8.
  - The university will mandate researchers to register and utilize the lab management software BioRAFT to manage lab staff training and track supplies.
  - Human subjects research continues to be suspended if it cannot be conducted virtually.

E. Potential Transformation to Higher Education

- "This is an Existential Time for Higher Ed": an Interview with Gordon Gee
  - E. Gordon Gee, the current president of West Virginia University, on why higher education is slow to change, and what advice he would give to a younger university president.
  - "The university of the future is going to be a ballerina, an institution that learns to dance."

F. Other Headlines and Emerging Trends

- **MSU Faculty awarded grants for COVID-19 research**
  - Dr. Christina Chan is investigating unknown side effects of COVID-19 treatments by combining horizontal and vertical analyses of global genomic datasets. This integrative modeling framework could be applicable to other pathogens and patient populations.
  - Dr. Caitlin Cavanaugh explores how the COVID-19 pandemic impacts anxiety and stress of life for at-risk children and their parents.

- **UC Awards $2M in Critical Research Seed Funding for COVID-19 High-Risk Populations**
  - The University of California announced the distribution of $2M in seed funding for important research across the state related to mitigating the impact of COVID-19, especially among those at greater risk.
  - The money comes from three statewide UCOP-based programs, and the projects were approved for six months after which time researchers can apply for additional funds to continue their project.

- **Brown University, If You Were Actually Serious About Racial Justice You Would Not be Cutting the Men's Track Team**
  - A Princeton alumnus questions equity in Brown University's decision to cut men's Track and Field from its varsity programs while simultaneously promoting statements that Brown is in support of confronting racial injustice.

Huron Research Whitepaper Summary

"Getting Back to Work: Ramping Up Your Research Programs in a Pandemic"

As America begins to open research operations under a "new normal," the Huron Research team wrote a whitepaper that summarizes their discussions with research leaders at more than 25 institutions between April 24 and May 5, 2020. The whitepaper can be found on the COVID-19 Resources for Higher Education page.

Institutions are asking **three primary questions** in regards to research re-opening:

1. How soon should we reopen?
2. Who can and should return to work?
3. Under what conditions should people return to work?

Although different states and thus their institutions are opening on different schedules, institutions are aligned on **four principles** related to research re-opening:

1. Safety, security, and well-being of researchers, staff, students, and subjects (human and animal)
2. Adherence to state and local government restrictions
3. Slow and deliberate ramp-up
4. Evidence-based and metrics-based decision making

In order to re-open, institutions agree that flexibility is key. Huron lays out **five recommendations** for institutions designing research re-opening plans:

1. Build capability for managing ongoing change
2. Develop tools and guidelines to facilitate planning at the local level
3. Optimize research administration to accommodate a work-from-home model
4. Evaluate the financial health of your research programs
5. Document at all times