






Huron produces regular **Findings Updates** summarizing relevant trends and headlines related to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on higher education.

### Latest Trends and Headlines

Trend Category	Trend Summary	Today's Headlines
 <p><b>Re-Opening Operations</b></p>	<p>Universities continue to announce, revise, and execute operating plans that were disrupted by the pandemic.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">Wisconsin</a> declares a public health emergency after an "alarming" increase in COVID-19 cases since WI college campuses reopened.</li> <li>▪ As <a href="#">Texas college towns</a> emerge as coronavirus hot spots, TX universities are trying to keep students from infecting locals.</li> <li>▪ <a href="#">James Madison University</a> in VA will restart in-person classes in October after shifting to remote-only instruction earlier this month.</li> <li>▪ Gov. Roy Cooper of <a href="#">North Carolina</a> announced that outdoor venues could re-open at limited capacity, creating a path for fans to attend college football games.</li> <li>▪ <a href="#">UNC Wilmington</a> will start giving prizes, like Chick-fil-A vouchers, to students wearing masks.</li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Wake Forest</a> president says he is "confident" students can stay on campus through Thanksgiving.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Student &amp; Enrollment Impact</b></p>	<p>The pandemic has created unprecedented challenges for students, and in turn, enrollment risks for many institutions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The pandemic has created new challenges for <a href="#">students with disabilities</a>, including test-taking, accessibility to necessary facilities, and completing online courses.</li> <li>▪ Two students at <a href="#">Brigham Young University</a> withdrew from the school in protest of safety requirements.</li> <li>▪ <a href="#">SAT and ACT exam</a> cancellations forced many students to travel hours to find open sites.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Financial Impact</b></p>	<p>Universities continue to use cuts, spending freezes, and other means to address funding gaps created by the pandemic.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ American College Health Association's new survey suggests <a href="#">colleges are decreasing funding to health services</a>.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Research Impact</b></p>	<p>Universities continue to ramp-up research activities, including activities directly related to COVID-19 research.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The <a href="#">University of Utah</a> will keep the research enterprise in the current Orange phase as the state moves to a less restrictive Yellow phase.</li> <li>▪ Scientists at <a href="#">Rush University</a> explore how the soluble urokinase receptor (suPAR) can be used to indicate the risk of acute kidney disease in hospitalized COVID-19 patients.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Potential Transformation to Higher Ed</b></p>	<p>The pandemic's economic and social impact could accelerate transformational change in higher education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The pandemic has supercharged tensions between students, faculty and university leadership, including at <a href="#">George Washington University</a>, where students and faculty are seeking their president's resignation.</li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Michigan offers free community college education</a> to essential workers (follow-up from previous newsletter story).</li> </ul>

## Today's Article Summaries

### A. Re-Opening Operations

- [Wisconsin declares public health emergency](#)
  - Governor said: "We are facing a new and dangerous phase of the COVID-19 pandemic."
  - The governor's office pointed to the state university system, whose 13 universities have all re-opened for in-person learning this fall, as a driver in the increasing numbers.
  - Last week, six out of eight Wisconsin cities listed among the top 20 cities in the U.S. where COVID-19 cases were rising fastest were home to UW System campuses.
  - From Aug. 31 to Sept. 21, the number of daily new cases rose from 678 to 1,791 -- a 2.6-fold increase in three weeks.
  - 18- to 24-year-olds have had a case rate five times higher than any other age group in the state over the past month.
- [Texas college towns emerge as coronavirus hot spots](#)
  - In the Texas counties where four-year college students make up at least 10% of the population, cases have grown 34% since Aug. 19.
  - Case rates have grown 23% in counties with a smaller proportion of students, including larger metropolitan areas like Houston and Dallas that also house universities.
  - The Travis County ZIP code, home to UT Austin, has the fastest-growing case count in TX.
  - UT-Austin students must show a negative coronavirus test to get in the gates for a football game against University of Texas at El Paso, even though the rest of the 15,000 fans did not.
  - In College Station, professors are teaching behind plexiglass, and classes run late in the evening so students don't crowd buildings.
- [James Madison University will re-start in-person classes in October](#)
  - The decision comes after the university halted face-to-face instruction early this month to deal with a "rapid increase" in the number of coronavirus cases.
  - Students had attended in-person and hybrid classes for less than a week before officials asked students to return home and transition to online learning.
  - Now, with a smaller on-campus population, university leaders say the school is ready to restart in-person classes Oct. 5.
  - The university has increased the number of quarantine beds for sick students and will limit classroom occupancy to 50 people.
- [North Carolina governor announces that outdoor venues can re-open at limited capacity](#)
  - College and professional sports teams in North Carolina may soon be allowed to host a few thousand fans in outdoor stadiums, Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper announced on Tuesday.
  - If the state's coronavirus numbers continue to improve or remain flat, Cooper said he plans to ease the occupancy restrictions for large outdoor entertainment venues starting Oct. 2.
  - Places that can seat more than 10,000 people outside would be able to operate at significantly reduced capacity, while adhering to the recommended 6 feet (1.8 meters) of physical distancing.
- [UNC Wilmington will start giving prizes, like Chick-fil-A vouchers, to students wearing masks](#)
  - The University of North Carolina Wilmington announced several campus updates as they continue to adapt changes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - Each week, on Mask Spotter Monday and Teal Mask Tuesday, Housing's student marketing assistants will traverse campus to give out prizes, including Chick-fil-A and Panda Express coupons, to students who are spotted wearing their masks.
  - At other times, peer educators from the Student Health Center will circulate around campus to give mask-wearing students hand sanitizer, stickers and other prizes.
- [Wake Forest President says he is "confident" students can stay on campus through Thanksgiving](#)

- President Nathan Hatch, in a message Monday to faculty and staff, said the private university's progress during the COVID-19 pandemic "so far has been very encouraging, and I believe that we can sustain it.
- "I believe that if the first four weeks are any indication, I am confident that we have the ability to remain on campus to Thanksgiving," Hatch said. "Students want to be here, and we want them here."

## B. Student & Enrollment Impact

- [Disabled University Students Braced For Fresh Challenges Amidst COVID-19 Resurgence](#)
  - Students with disabilities have faced specific challenges related to the pandemic. These challenges include being unable to assess accessibility at institutions pre-enrollment, being clinically vulnerable in shared facilities, ability to use scribes in exams, and some disabilities preventing students from being able to do online/hybrid courses.
  - Many times, accessibility is not considered or prioritized, leading to higher levels of dissatisfaction for disabled students as compared to their non-disabled counterparts.
- [Two students at Brigham Young University withdraw from school in protest of safety requirements](#)
  - The students who left were among 15 that the university announced last week would be disciplined for refusing to wear masks and socially distance, confirmed BYU spokesperson Carri Jenkins.
  - University officials said that discipline would include suspension or restrictions from on-campus participation, such as classes, work, or in-person campus services.
- [SAT and ACT exams canceled for many students, leaving some to travel hours to find open sites](#)
  - The coronavirus pandemic upended college entrance exams last spring, and the chaos is continuing into the fall as students face test cancellations and long journeys to an open testing site.
  - The College Board said Tuesday that 334,000 students registered for the Sept. 26 SAT and 363,000 for the Oct. 3 SAT, but testing site closures mean at least half of registered students won't be able to take the test.
  - This comes after about 53% of testing centers for the Aug. 29 SAT exam closed or reduced capacity, leaving only 150,000 students able to take the test that 402,000 students had registered for, according to the College Board.

## C. Financial Impact

- [American College Health Association's new survey suggests colleges are decreasing funding to health services](#)
  - Of respondents to the association's survey who knew their health center budget allocation for the 2021 fiscal year, 43% said that funding would decrease relative to FY20.
  - Although 40% said they were expecting to hire medical professionals, nearly one-quarter said they were expecting reductions for those staff instead.
  - Larry Ladd, a senior consultant with the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, said the decreased budgets may be a result of decreased demand for the most basic services university health centers offer. There are fewer students on most campuses this year, and the desire from those who are on campus to visit a health center may be decreased.

## D. Research Impact

- [University of Utah: Research Community Updates on Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
  - The University of Utah announced the school would remain in Orange phase restrictions as the State moved the county to the less restrictive Yellow phase.
  - This move is the result of a "circuit breaker" shift to only online classes for students.
  - The Orange level is the second-highest level on the university's [four-color coded risk guide](#).
  - Starting [September 27<sup>th</sup> through October 11<sup>th</sup>](#), the university is asking research personnel to minimize their time on campus and transition their work remotely if possible.
  - Access to facilities will be further restricted by the Office of the Vice President for Research for researchers to specific buildings during the Vice-Presidential Debate Oct 6<sup>th</sup> to Oct 7<sup>th</sup>.

- [Patients with COVID-19 may have higher risk of kidney injury](#)
  - Rush University scientists are working with the University of Michigan to explore the role COVID-19 plays in an inflammatory response of the protein soluble urokinase receptor (suPAR), an indicator of kidney injury.
  - 352 COVID-19 hospital admitted patients suPAR levels were analyzed and were higher in patients that developed acute kidney injury.
  - Patients that required dialysis had a 20-fold increase in suPAR levels.
  - The team hopes to use suPAR levels to provide a risk stratification tool for hospitalized COVID-19 patients.

## E. Potential Transformation to Higher Education

- [The pandemic has supercharged tensions at George Washington University](#)
  - Six months into the coronavirus pandemic, with the university facing a bleak financial outlook, familiar tensions have become supercharged.
  - Faculty members are decrying the corporatization of the university, students are calling out administrators for inappropriate comments and actions, and staff are feeling unheard and underappreciated.
  - President of GWU Faculty Association says “We need a change in leadership to have a steady way forward,” Chapman said. “We’re in a pretty dire place.”
- [Michigan offers free community college education to essential workers](#) [headline is a follow-up from previous newsletter story]
  - Michigan is offering two years of free community college to essential workers who have worked during the pandemic. The definition is loose, and more than 600,000 residents could qualify.
  - Michigan's program would cover a two-year associate's degree for workers who were required by their job to leave the house and who worked at least 11 weeks in the spring during the pandemic.
  - Program includes grocery workers, gas station clerks and sanitation workers, so long as they don't have an associate's degree or aren't defaulting on a federal loan.

## Recent Huron Articles

Title	Author	Date
<b>Re-Opening Operations</b>		
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<a href="#">Infographic: Classroom Optimization</a>	Lee Smith	August 4, 2020
<a href="#">COVID-19 and Hurricane Katrina: Higher Education Parallels and Lessons Learned</a>	Christopher Byrne & Chris Powers	July 14, 2020
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<a href="#">The Flexible Future: Actionable Scenario Planning for Higher Education Leaders</a>	Mark Finlan	July 7, 2020
<b>Student &amp; Enrollment Impact</b>		
<a href="#">Pricing Today and Tomorrow</a>	Peter Stokes, Steve Hahn	September 16, 2020
<a href="#">Enrollment Success Includes an Integrated Transfer Student Strategy</a>	Kristine Dillon, Steve Hahn	September 4, 2020
<a href="#">Test Scores: Optional?</a>	Kristine Dillon, Steve Hahn, Ben Chrischilles	September 1, 2020
<a href="#">Fall Is Not Lost: Student Engagement Strategies to Improve 2020 Enrollments</a>	Steve Hahn	August 10, 2020
<a href="#">The Post-Pandemic Evolution of Student Data Privacy</a>	Merritt Neale Matthew Tryniecki	August 10, 2020
<a href="#">Infographic: Tuition Pricing Strategies for the Fall</a>	Colin McWilliams	August 26, 2020
<a href="#">3 Solutions For Improving The College Application Process</a>	Steve Hahn, Laura Zimmermann	August 12, 2020
<b>Financial Impact</b>		
<a href="#">Strategic Higher Education M&amp;A: Assessing Institutional Readiness</a>	Robert Spencer	September 11, 2020
<a href="#">Thinking Different about Strategic Alliances in Higher Education</a>	Robert Spencer	August 25, 2020
<a href="#">Major &amp; Minor Cuts: Academic Program Eliminations in the Age of COVID-19</a>	Jeremy Wolos	July 31, 2020
<a href="#">Infographic: Impacts on Intercollegiate Athletics</a>	Jay Rowan	July 24, 2020
<a href="#">Cut from the Team: Athletics Program Eliminations in the Age of COVID-19</a>	Clare Conaty	July 10, 2020
<a href="#">Avoiding the Path to Closure</a>	Jennifer Ramey	July 9, 2020
<b>Research Impact</b>		
<a href="#">Research Enterprise Impacts and Opportunities</a>	Huron Research Team	September 1, 2020
<a href="#">Getting Back to Work: Ramping Up Your Research Programs During a Pandemic</a>	Rick Rohrbach	June 11, 2020

Potential Transformation to Higher Education		
<a href="#">Why Cloud? Why Now? Disruption Puts Spotlight on Data and Systems</a>	Ted Simpson	September 3, 2020
<a href="#">The Value Proposition of Joint Ventures in Employer-Supported Strategic Education – Creating Opportunities for Working Adults</a>	Peter Stokes, Jonathan Krasnov	August 7, 2020
<a href="#">Empowering Agile Decision Making in Higher Education</a>	Mark Finlan	July 1, 2020



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